CANDOR
DUM
IUNCTA IN UNO

Queen Caroline Matilda
of Denmark
Sister to George the Third

MEMOIRS AND CORRESPONDENCE

(OFFICIAL AND FAMILIAR)

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SIR ROBERT MURRAY KEITH, K.B.,

ENVOY EXTRAORDINARY AND MINISTER PLENIPOTENTIARY AT THE COURTS OF DRESDEN, COPENHAGEN, AND VIENNA, FROM 1769 TO 1792.

WITH A MEMOIR OF

QUEEN CAROLINA MATILDA OF DENMARK,

AND AN ACCOUNT OF THE REVOLUTION THERE IN 1772.

EDITED BY

MRS. GILLESPIE SMYTH.

Letters—the living thoughts of a race departed; the record of their playful humours and buoyant fancies, their fresh, cordial, overflowing love! . . . . We go through the world, blaming its coldness, and cursing its cruelties, and its crimes; but all unconscious of the vast riches of joy, and intellect, and affection, which hem us in on all sides, and overflow continually into the Eternal Sea. Thanks be to an all-gracious God, who has caused them to flow!—HOWITT.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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TO

THE COUNTESS DOWAGER OF HARDWICKE,

ONE OF THE FEW SURVIVORS OF

THE WORTHIES COMMEMORATED IN THE FOLLOWING PAGES:

REGARDED THROUGH LIFE WITH PARENTAL PREDILECTION BY THEIR SUBJECT,

AND WITH FILIAL VENERATION BY THEIR EDITOR;

THEY ARE, WITH ENHANCED GRATITUDE FOR THE KIND PERMISSION,

AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED.

PREFACE.

The motives which have given birth to the following publication, are such, as it is believed may enlist the sympathies, if not challenge the approbation, of the reader. There are, in the annals of every family, any of whose members have filled conspicuous stations in the public service—some privileged epochs round which its own memories have been fondly taught to congregate, and which it would fain rescue from oblivion in those of others. Such, during the long diplomatic career of Sir Robert Murray Keith, was the episode of the revolution in Denmark in 1772; and his spirited rescue, as representative of Great Britain, of a "daughter of England," and the sister of his sovereign, from a fate the least disastrous probable issue of which was imprisonment for life in a northern fortress.

The omission—probably from prudential motives—of this most critical and important interposition, in a foreign work of fiction, recently translated, and introduced to the

British public under the attractive title of the "Queen of Denmark,"* (an omission which the present editor may be pardoned for ranking with that of the "part of Hamlet," from another Danish tragedy) naturally led to a search into those family archives where reposed the familiar letters and official correspondence penned during the events themselves, and so honourable alike to the character, the feelings, and the fame of him by whom they were written and received.†

To weave these valuable and hitherto inedited documents into a slight record of the charms, the sorrows, and the injuries of the British Princess, to whom (in his own striking words) it was a "proud commencement for the Envoy's chivalry to convey, through the vaulted entrance of Hamlet's castle,‡ the welcome tidings of fraternal affection and liberty restored,"—was felt to be alike a duty and a pleasure. To this, the following

* The Danish title of the work is "Old Recollections;" that of the German translation "Christian the Seventh and his Court." As a novel, it possesses considerable interest.

† On a search being instituted (by the kind permission of the Earl of Hardwicke) in those rich repositories of historical and political materials, to which his great ancestor, and that able negotiator, Sir Joseph Yorke, (afterwards Lord Dover,) so largely contributed, and to which the dispatches of Sir R. M. Keith were, by his surviving relatives, appropriately added—though the strictly official details of the Danish affair were found to have been (naturally enough, from the peculiar delicacy of their subject) withdrawn; yet enough remained to lend ample testimony to the wrongs of the princess, and the energy of her diplomatic defender.

‡ That of Cronenbourg, near Elsinore, a noble gothic fortress, the supposed site of Shakspeare's drama, and where a "deeper tragedy" (to quote a distinguished Danish writer) "must awaken the sympathies of Englishmen, since Carolina Matilda was confined there, the victim of a foul and murderous court intrigue."

sheets would have been exclusively limited, had not the reputation of Sir R. M. Keith for political sagacity, on the one hand, and wit and *bonhommie* on the other, suggested, on high literary authorities, the propriety of a more extensive selection from his twenty years' correspondence, while a resident at other foreign courts, than had been originally designed.

This enlarged plan, resulting in a copious *mélange* of the grave and the gay, unique perhaps in diplomatic life, and probably, on that account, more likely to find acceptance with the general reader—has seemed to justify, if not to render necessary, a more detailed account of the writer's family than would have served to introduce the letters from Denmark; as well as a review of the circumstances by which his character was fashioned, and its rare combination of soldier frankness, and courtier-like refinement, of political acumen, and domestic playfulness, developed and matured.

Should the indulgent reader, in tracing, as drawn by his own hand, the lineaments of one whom the same process has enabled a relative, early deprived of his society by death, for the first time to comprehend and appreciate—in any measure share her impressions—the dutiful labour of love of the Editor will have reaped its rich reward.

To the merely political reader, some apology may appear necessary, for the paucity of what the sated Envoy so often turns from with disgust, as the "*tools of his trade,*" viz., diplomatic details, during the long years intervening between 1772 and 1789. But besides

the obsoleteness at this day, and comparative unimportance in European policy, of the events occurring at Vienna, during that long lull, preceding an unexampled tempest—they have been amply detailed, with copious references almost at every page to the valuable dispatches of Sir R. M. Keith, by Archdeacon Coxe; so that to take up the political thread where he left it, previously to the singular and hitherto inedited negotiations at the Congress of Sistovo in 1791, has been not only the Editor's most eligible, but sole possible course.

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MEMOIRS AND CORRESPONDENCE

OF

SIR ROBERT MURRAY KEITH.

"The Keiths, of Craig, in Kincardineshire," says that accurate antiquary and genealogist, Sir Walter Scott (whose well known friendship for one gifted member of the family, led him, in one of the later editions of his novels, to give this sketch of its history), "descended from John Keith, fourth son of William, second Earl Marischal; who got from his father, about the year 1480, the lands of Craig, and part of Garvock, in that county.

"Colonel Robert Keith, of Craig, the seventh in descent from John,* had, by his wife, Agnes, daughter of Robert Murray, of Murrayshall, one son, Robert Keith, ambassador to the courts of Vienna and Petersburgh; who died in Edinburgh in 1774. He married Margaret, second daughter of Sir William Cunningham, of Caprington, by Janet, only child and heiress of Sir

* And twenty-third, in the direct male line from their common ancestor.

James Dick of Prestonfield ;* and among other children of the marriage, were the late well known diplomatist, Sir Robert Murray Keith, K.B., a general in the army, and twenty years the representative of Great Britain at the Court of Vienna; Sir Basil Keith, who died in 1777, governor of the Island of Jamaica, and my late excellent friend, Mrs. Anne Murray Keith, whose interesting character, in its leading points, I may now confess, the lady termed Mrs. Bethune Baliol,† was designed to shadow out; and whose death, occurring in 1818, had saddened a wide circle much attached to her, as well for her genuine virtue, and amiable qualities of disposition, as for the extent of information which she possessed, and the delightful manner in which she used to communicate it."

If ever these endowments, and the kindred qualities of unbending integrity and uprightness, in public and private life were hereditary—their possession by Sir Robert Keith, and the sister thus worthily commemorated,‡ may be traced to the precept and example of a father, who seems to have merited and enjoyed, in no ordinary degree, the affectionate esteem of the generation among whom he lived.

Himself the son of a soldier, and of no unworthy one,§ he appears never to have filled a directly military situation; though he passed several years of his life in

* Both baronetcies are now worthily represented by Sir Robert Keith Dick Cunynghame, of Prestonfield, near Edinburgh.

† In the novel of the "Chronicles of the Canongate."

‡ At a future and more appropriate period, along with an interesting acknowledgment of his literary obligations to one whom he affectionately styles "a late dear friend of mine," will be given the beautiful letter, written immediately after her decease, in which her character is more fully delineated by one so qualified for the task.

§ His distinguished cousin and contemporary, Earl Marischal, the friend of the great Frederick, and brother to the celebrated Marshal Keith,

familiar domestication with one of the ablest captains of the age, as Secretary to the Forces, with the combined armies, under the great Earl of Stair. Of the satisfactory manner in which Mr. Keith discharged the duties of that responsible office, numerous confidential documents, showing the high esteem in which he was held by his noble principal, exist to bear testimony; while one little record of a transaction, unknown, probably save to his own nearest and dearest, survives to prove the nice sense of honour which could influence a gentleman of very small, though ancient estate, with a large and increasing family,* to decline, as inconsistent with his public character, a source of certain and almost unlimited emolument, which some might have deemed not incompatible with a semi-official situation, whose novelty (for it was then, it seems, for the first time filled), must have left its liabilities less accurately defined.

The offer, couched in flattering terms, and, with little doubt, apparently, of ready acceptance, of sharing with him (without pecuniary advances, or even the use of his name) the contract for supplying the allied armies, then about to enter Germany, is still extant in the writing of the liberal proposer, his friend Sir Abraham Hume. A slip of paper affixed to it, simply notes (for the sole information of his own family) that it was

thus characterizes him in a billet addressed to Sir Robert Murray Keith :—

"*Potzdam, 26th December*, 1768.

"I am obliged to you for letting me know of your nomination to the Court of Dresden; for it gives me great pleasure, from the particular concern I take in what regards you, my friendship for your father, and the memory of your *grandfather, who had few equals*. You are a good race—I wish you would continue it."

* Eleven children, eight sons and three daughters, were born to him, but few of whom died in early infancy.

declined by Mr. Keith, as unsuitable to the position he occupied in the public service.

Of the chivalrous and patriotic sentiments he was likely to have imbibed, during his residence with the great commander, whom disgust at not being permitted to follow up (to the probable destruction of the French army) the successes obtained by the victory of Dettingen induced soon after to resign, a proof has been found among his papers, in a copy of the letter addressed by Lord Stair, (then deep in rural avocations on his estate at Newliston), on the breaking out of the rebellion in Scotland in 1745, to the Duke of Cumberland. It may show how completely in the mind of a patriot and a Briton, personal pique and private considerations* gave way before the emergencies of the public service.

THE EARL OF STAIR TO THE DUKE OF CUMBERLAND.

Sir,

I give your Royal Highness the trouble of this letter, to beg that you will be pleased to intercede with his Majesty, that I may have leave to follow your Royal Highness into the North against the rebels. I shall think myself very happy, if any skill I may have acquired in military matters, may be of use to your

* Shortly before he had thus petitioned for leave to prolong his retirement:—

"My dear Keith,

"I send you the enclosed for the Duke of Newcastle, and pray take notice to him that I shall look upon it as an indulgence to stay in the country as long as may be, that I may give directions about many things that amuse me, though they may not appear very material to his Grace."

Royal Highness in the service of my country. I shall not use any arguments to prove my disinterested attachment to its welfare; and at the same time my sincere desire that it may prosper in the hands of your Royal Highness. I shall only beg leave to assure you, that on great matters, I shall give my opinion fairly and honestly, without being wedded to my own way of thinking, and without being in any degree incompatible with others.

I have the honour to be, &c.

STAIR.

To H. R. H. the Duke of Cumberland.

The Duke's reply was as follows:*—

MY LORD,

I shall certainly acquaint the King with your obliging request, and wish it may be granted, knowing the weight it would be of, to have a General with me, whose experience and skill are so universally approved. But I fear that the King will hardly be persuaded to leave the army that remains about London without a chief, while we seem to be threatened with an invasion from France. Whether the king grants your very obliging request or not, I shall, and do, take it for a real mark of your sincere friendship for me.

I remain your affectionate friend,

WILLIAM.

St. James's, Nov. 22nd, 1745.

While the tenor of this reply leads us to anticipate that the youthful commander and the King his father, would be unwilling to divide with an older and more

* Found among Mr. Keith's papers in his own hand-writing.

renowned warrior, the triumphs of Culloden, posterity may rejoice that his well-won laurels were unstained by its blood!

The talents for business manifested by Mr. Keith in the situation he held with the armies, must have led, on their dispersion, to his appointment* as Under-Secretary, by Lord Sandwich, then at the head of foreign affairs; a first step in diplomacy quickly followed by farther advancement. In the negotiations preceding the important treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle in 1748, Mr. Keith seems to have taken a very prominent and influential part; as appears from the confidential tone of the then ministers in their communications with him, and their frequent expressions of surprise at points gained by him, when almost given up as hopeless.

On March 27th Lord Sandwich thus writes:—"Your intimation that it is possible to engage the republic to take the troops, even on the conditions contained in my orders, gives me great spirits. I heartily wish you may be able to carry it through, both for the sake of the public, and for the credit that will accrue to you from your success in this affair, which I own, when I left the Hague, I thought *desperate*."

On the 31st his Lordship thus again expresses himself:—"I heartily wish you may be able to make your words good, and get the business through, as it will deservedly do you credit in England. I own I despaired of it; but if it can be done, it will have a very good effect on the other side the water."

The most conclusive proof, however, of the estimate

* On this nomination the anti-Scottish spirit, so prevalent in Horace Walpole's days, thus finds vent:—"Lord Sandwich has made Mr. Keith his secretary. I don't believe your ancestor would have chosen his from *California*."

formed (on the signature of the preliminaries, a few days after the above), of the diplomatic talents of Mr. Keith, was his immediate appointment to the embassy at Vienna.

In the month of October in the same year, when the treaty was definitively concluded, the Duke of Newcastle, then prime minister, thus writes to him. And as a specimen of the *confidential* diplomacy (the letter is autograph, and marked "*very private*") of a statesman, whose abilities, great personal awkwardness, and many glaring littlenesses in character and conduct, perhaps led his contemporaries to undervalue, we shall give it (as well as one or two subsequent ones, preserved apparently as curious by Mr. Keith himself) entire.

Hanover, Oct. 18th, 1748.

Dear Sir,

I have too much satisfaction in the happy conclusion of the definitive treaty, with the approbation and concurrence of the Court of Vienna, not to take this opportunity of most *sincerely congratulating* you upon it. I own my utmost ambition and constant view has been to end this war, with preserving the strictest union with the house of Austria. For this reason, as well as others, I opposed the separate negotiation proposed upon the communication of Monsieur D'Argenson's project, by the Dutch ministers, in the year 1746. For this reason also, with others, I opposed the proceeding in the manner then wished by some, upon the overtures made last year by Marshal Saxe to his Royal Highness the Duke of Cumberland, who did me the honour entirely to agree with me. And lastly, which is fresh in every person's memory, I insisted upon the

immediate communication of Monsieur St. Sévérin's project, and Lord Sandwich's *contre projet*, to Count Kaunitz, *before the king himself had seen either of those pieces;* and when Monsieur de St. Sévérin went to Compiègne, to make the report of them. And I flatter myself my having been able, in some measure, to have prevented these several steps, and having ever since preserved the most constant and unreserved concert in everything, has made way for that great work which is now so happily brought to perfection.

Notwithstanding this, I have the misfortune to be suspected at Vienna of partiality to the King of Sardinia, and a design to set the Czarina against the Empress-queen. The folly and falsity of both which imputations, their Imperial majesties are too just and too clear-sighted to give into. When you have the honour to attend the Emperor, you will lay me at his Imperial Majesty's feet, with my most humble acknowledgments of his great grace and goodness to me. I am very sensible how much the peace of Europe, and the particular good correspondence between his Majesty and the Empress-queen, is owing to his Imperial Majesty's good offices and interposition upon this late occasion. For *God's sake*, let us have no obstacle to the exchange of the ratifications. You see how I put that affair.

I have another favour to ask of the Emperor; which is, that his Imperial Majesty would not suffer Monsieur Wasner to quit his commission in England. His fidelity to the Empress-queen, his great ability and knowledge in business, and, above all, his particular knowledge of England and his distinguished zeal for the maintenance of the union, make his return to England, at this critical time especially, absolutely

necessary. I have no objection to your reading this letter to his Imperial Majesty, if you think proper. In it he will find the sentiments of my heart.

I am, with great truth, Dear Sir,

Your most affectionate, humble servant,

HOLLES NEWCASTLE.

P.S.—Any *embarras* in the exchange of the ratifications will knock down all.

There are few readers of contemporary political gossip, who will not trace in this letter the leading characteristics of the man and minister.

But to return to Mr. Keith. In 1750, Lord Holdernesse, then Secretary for Foreign Affairs, thus writes to him :—

"I am very glad to find, on many occasions, how well satisfied the king and his ministers are with your way of transacting business ; and with the compliments of the season, heartily wish you all manner of prosperity. With great truth and esteem,

HOLDERNESSE."

In July, 1753, Sir Joseph Yorke, himself an able and approved member of the *corps diplomatique*, thus writes :—"The arrival of a messenger this moment from London, gives me an opportunity of renewing my wishes for your health, and success in the *great points* that are transacting *through your channel*."

In 1754, he thus expresses himself more fully :—

Hague, January 16th.

"The two last Imperial couriers that went through this place, were so pressed for time, that they did not allow me enough to make my compliments to you in writing; and I have not thought it necessary to put you to the expense of postage, to tell you—what I hope you have long since been convinced of—that nobody is more your humble servant, or more sincerely wishes you well, than I do. It is for this reason, that I must now beg leave to break in upon you, with my most hearty congratulations, upon the new mark of our Royal Master's favour and approbation which you have just now received. This distinction* has been longer deferred than I thought it well could be; but as it comes after so many years' experience of your conduct at the Court where you reside, though it is not so profitable, yet it is, if possible, more honourable.

"You have gone through (forgive me the expression) the *fiery ordeal,* and you are stamped as *pure gold* after a very full trial. May you go on as successfully as you have hitherto done, for the public service; and be an instrument of perfecting those important negotiations, at which you have so faithfully laboured. You have not two better well-wishers than Count Bentinck and Prince Louis; and I should not do full justice to their sentiments, if I concealed from you how much they are pleased at what the King has done for you."

The opinion entertained by the former of these

* Probably his elevation to ambassadorial rank with the corresponding pay, as in a letter shortly before, from the Duke of Newcastle, he says, "You shall be taken care of to your *entire satisfaction.*"

distinguished men (who had recently taken a leading position in the affairs of his native country, Flanders) of the personal credit of Mr. Keith, as well as the extent of their mutual friendship, founded on mutual esteem, may be gathered from the following letter, written by Count Bentinck in 1756:—

Dear Sir,

I will not make any reflections on the present state of affairs in Europe. I know you, and you know me. You will oblige me in the highest degree, and do me the most signal service, by employing your personal credit with the Vice-Chancellor, Count Colloredo, to procure me the speedy expedition of the Imperial confirmation, which the grand majority of the Aulic Council voted for. I cannot doubt of the Emperor's joining the majority.

As to affairs in England, they give me great uneasiness. Not as to her situation in regard to France, for I think England a match for France; and the odds, in my opinion, are in her favour. But resolutions there, as here, are often the result of a conciliatory deliberation between differing opinions. I wish the Duke of Newcastle had resolved to feel his strength, and had had the constancy to stand on his own legs, which he easily might have done. But he has people who make him go out of his way, and I heartily wish you may not suffer by it. But as the post you are in is certainly *one of the most brilliant*, it may easily excite envy, and desire of being in your place. If I have any indication of what is now mere suspicion, my friendship for you will make me forewarn you immediately.

Yours, Dear Sir, for ever and ever,

Bentinck.

However unquestionably "brilliant" might be (as alleged by the writer of the above) the "post" thus envied by brother diplomatists, its realities corresponded rather more nearly with the "fiery ordeal" spoken of by one himself no stranger to the thankless toils of negotiation. It was at a moment of peculiar irritation and dissatisfaction with England, on the part of the politically inflexible, though personally amiable, Empress-queen, that Mr. Keith entered on his extremely delicate mission. The Duke of Newcastle thus wrote on the occasion:—

[*Private.*]

Dear Sir,

You will receive by this messenger, his Majesty's orders for your conduct upon a very delicate and important occasion; and I am persuaded that you will execute them with all the punctuality, decorum, and respect, which are due to the great powers you are about to approach, and are so agreeable to his Majesty's royal will and intentions. It would be the highest presumption and vanity in me, to imagine that anything I could add could contribute in any measure to the success of your representations. But I flatter myself that my zeal, attachment, and devotion, to the House of Austria, cannot be called in question; and I must be allowed to make some judgment of what may, or may not, be the consequences, if you should not obtain those orders to be immediately sent to Count Kaunitz, which you are now desired to solicit.

In this light, and this light only, I beg you would lay me at the Emperor's feet; and humbly implore his Imperial Majesty to consider, that the fate of Europe is now in the Empress-queen's hands; that upon the orders to be sent to Count Kaunitz, will depend the

putting it in the power, or not, of those who wish ill to the present system, to disconcert, if not entirely to overturn it. It may be too much for me to say—but I say it from a heart entirely devoted to the interest of the King, my master, and to the support of that cause in which his Majesty has so much signalised himself.

Dear Sir, with great truth, yours,

HOLLES NEWCASTLE.

"The ill-humour of the Court of Vienna," says Coxe, in his History of the House of Austria (the Fifth Volume of which is chiefly based on the official despatches of Mr. Keith, and his son and successor Sir R. M. Keith), "had been apparent during the whole progress of the negotiation. The Empress-queen even endeavoured to obtain possession of the Low Countries, without acceding to the definitive treaty; but her hopes were frustrated by the firmness of the British Cabinet; which found it necessary to extort her accession, by threatening to sign without her. The disagreeable task of communicating this intelligence to the Empress, was assigned to Mr. Keith. She received the new minister with her usual benignity; and testified a grateful sense of the assistance which she had derived from England. But when Mr. Keith requested her concurrence to the peace, and was proceeding to announce the resolution of his Court, the high-spirited princess interrupted him, and exclaimed, with great emotion, "I already know too much of that business, and will leave that part of your commission to be settled between you and my ministers!"

"Her chagrin," pursues the same authority, "broke out on many occasions; and on none more than when Mr. Keith requested an audience, to offer his congratulations on the return of a peace, with which (though it

terminated a bloody and extensive war, at whose commencement her very existence had been, and perhaps, but for the support of Great Britain, successfully menaced, and whose close left her in possession of nearly the whole of her inheritance,) she was so far from being satisfied, that her minister was ordered to observe, that compliments of *condolence* were more proper than those of congratulation, and insinuated that the British minister would oblige his mistress by sparing her a conversation which would be highly disagreeable to her, and no less unpleasing to him." *

There cannot, perhaps, be a more conclusive proof of the mild conciliatory character for which Mr. Keith was so eminently distinguished, as well as of its prompt efficacy in disarming hostility of so decided a character, than is incidentally furnished by the following letter from the Duke of Newcastle, written within a few months of the angry reception above described :—

Newcastle House, April 18th, 1749.

Dear Sir,

I have this day received the favour of your's, of the 16th instant, with a private one of the same date, to me. I have not seen the King since your letter was decyphered; but I am persuaded that the Empress-queen's conversation with you, in the drawing-room, will have given his Majesty the greatest satisfaction, the King wishing nothing more than to pursue the most perfect union, friendship, and concert, with her Imperial Majesty, in everything that relates to their mutual interest. I could not let this post go without letting you know the sense that I have of the Empress-queen's

* Coxe's History of the House of Austria.

gracious expressions on my subject. I beg you would take all opportunities of laying me at her feet, and of assuring their Imperial Majesties that they have not at their own Court a minister who wishes better to them than I do; or, as far as depends upon me, endeavours more to promote their real service. And this from a principle, that I am thus doing the best service to the King, my master, and to my own country, which must always be my first consideration. I have the vanity to think that my well-meant endeavours have not altogether been disappointed; which a thorough impartial examination into the transactions of the last three years will make appear. My present great comfort is, that there seems to be such an union of sentiments between the King and their Imperial Majesties, and any little *aigreurs* that misunderstandings or misrepresentations may have occasioned, are *now so far forgot,* that I flatter myself, for the future, we shall have no other contest but that of striving to be forwardest to do agreeable things to each other. Though your letters by Dick were in the main extremely satisfactory, yet you will not wonder that a *heart like mine* did not *till now* find in them all that I expected.

Your's, &c.,

HOLLES NEWCASTLE.

MR. KEITH TO THE DUKE OF NEWCASTLE.*

Vienna, April 16th, 1749.

MY LORD,

On Saturday last, late in the evening, I received the honour of your Grace's despatch of the

* This letter (not among those quoted by Coxe) is so graphic a

21st of March, and next morning, according to your directions, communicated the substance of it to Count Uhlfeld. I took this occasion to observe to him that the affair of the 100,000*l.*, with all the circumstances which attended it, was an undoubted proof of the King's firm resolution to end the war, and all demands relative to it, in the manner the most agreeable to the Empress-queen, and the most likely to cement and establish the most perfect concord with their Imperial Majesties. Monsieur Uhlfeld—as he well might—was extremely pleased with this communication, and seemed thoroughly sensible of the generous and friendly part which his Majesty had acted. He said he was just going to Court, and would take that opportunity of apprising their Imperial Majesties of the information I had given him, which he did not doubt would be highly acceptable to them.

It is with great satisfaction that I can now acquaint your Grace that the information I transmitted by Dick, the messenger, of the good disposition of this Court was well founded; for last night, at the drawing-room at Schönbrun, the Empress-queen accosted me in the most gracious manner. Her Majesty said, though the place was public and the company very numerous, she could not let slip that occasion of telling me that she was perfectly well satisfied with the substance of the despatches I had lately received; that she was very sensible of these last marks of his Majesty's friendship, and was much obliged to him for them: that the money, though it came very seasonably, was not the circum-

picture of the happier moments of the intercourse which for nine years subsisted between the writer and the illustrious personages engaged, that it has been deemed eligible to give it entire, as also throwing light on the British Premier's delighted reply.

stance that pleased her most, but that her greatest satisfaction was to find that the King agreed with her in his thoughts on public affairs, and above all, that he did her the justice to believe, that she had never been capable of any intention to disturb the tranquillity of Europe. She said she had always had, and ever should have, the greatest disposition to live in the most perfect harmony and concert with his Majesty, and she added, smiling, that she hoped things were now in such a situation between us, that she should not need to fear any more *being scolded.*

I answered, that what her Majesty had now said made me very happy, as it put it in my power to send the King, my master, the news in the world that would be most pleasing to him; and that I could venture to assure her Majesty, that she would meet with all the returns of friendship and confidence she could expect, or wish for, at the King's hands; who would never fail to give her the most essential proofs of his regard for her royal person, and of his attention to her interests: and I said, smiling (as her Majesty had done), that on our side, we had never had any inclination *to scold;* and that for the future, there would be no more occasion for any thing of that kind, as her Majesty's discourse showed that the opinions of the two Courts were now as much united as their interests; and that nothing could contribute more to keep up this good understanding, than to forget any little disputes which might have happened. That, for my part, I had always considered them only as *Lovers' Quarrels,* which commonly ended in a thorough reconciliation; and that upon this occasion, the event had justified my opinion.

The Empress then said, in the same strain, that she was willing to look upon them in that light; that she had ever wished, above all things, to live well with his

Majesty, whom she considered as her oldest and best friend; and that she expected the King would have equal consideration for her, as she was sure that she deserved his confidence, as much, at least, as any of his new friends. I replied, that the King had not only never preferred any other friend to her Majesty, but that I could take it upon me to say, that he had never put any one, old or new, in competition with her; that, though I could not help remarking that the insinuation her Majesty had dropped about "*new friends,*" was a little unjust, yet I owned it gave me pleasure, as I thought jealousy a *mark of love.* The Empress answered that she could not deny that she was a little jealous;* and that it proceeded from the inclination she had always had to love us. "*Mais*" (dit-elle), "*je suis Dame, et comme telle, je veux qu'on me fasse les avances.*" I said that her Majesty had all the right in the world to demand it, that we were extremely sensible that she deserved it, and that she might depend upon our doing it.

This, as near as I can recollect, was the substance of the Empress's conversation with me; but in the course of it, she took occasion to say many very handsome things with regard to his Majesty's person; and she expressed a thorough satisfaction at the King's behaviour towards her, and the disposition of his servants to second his Majesty's views.

* In another letter, Mr. Keith says:—"I have, in former communications, insinuated to your Grace, that with very quick parts, and a thorough good understanding, this Princess has a considerable tincture of jealousy in her constitution; and it never appears more strongly than with regard to her friendship with his Majesty, in which she cannot bear to have *any rival.* This she owns herself to be the case; and Count Uhlfeld has urged me for *God's sake* to do what I could to prevent any hint being given by my Court to justify such a suspicion, which would have the most *fatal effects.*"

MR. KEITH TO THE DUKE OF NEWCASTLE.

Vienna, May 7th, 1749.

My Lord,

I yesterday delivered the King's letters of notification at the *appartement,* to their Imperial Majesties, who both received with satisfaction the news of the increase of his Majesty's family, and desired me to make their compliments of congratulation to the King upon this occasion, and to return their thanks for this mark of his attention. The delivery of these letters gave me the opportunity of a pretty long conversation with both the Emperor and Empress, but separately. In that with her Majesty I informed her that your Grace had received my despatches, and had laid them before the King; and that the contents of them had given his Majesty great satisfaction in every respect. The Empress expressed great pleasure; she said she was very happy to find that the King approved their ideas, and was convinced of the sincerity of their intentions for maintaining the peace of the North, and the general tranquillity of Europe. She said repose was absolutely necessary for them in their present circumstances; and her Majesty added, that it should always be her study to cultivate and improve the new friendship and correspondence with the King, and that she thought things were now happily in such a situation, and the interests of the two Courts so very much united, that she could foresee nothing that could happen to lessen that harmony which was so necessary for their mutual safety.

After I had left the Empress, the Emperor did me the honour to desire I would go with him into the garden; and when we were there, his Majesty began a conversation in the most amicable manner in the

world. He said I might assure the King my master, that however defective they might be now and then in forms, they were "*des honnêtes gens au fond,*" and that we should always find them so; that they were very sensible of his Majesty's friendship upon all occasions, and should never fail on their side in making suitable returns. The Emperor then talked of the present situation of the affairs of Europe, and said that it was both their interest and inclination to hinder any new flame to break out which might endanger the public tranquillity; that they would heartily concur with his Majesty in every measure that could contribute to so desirable an end; and that he hoped, considering the present disposition of France, there was no immediate danger of any new disturbances. He said, however, he could not help having some apprehensions from the preparations the King of Prussia had made, and the great expense he had put himself to; which, from the knowledge he had of that Prince's disposition, he could not imagine he would do without some view of *turning it to account*. On the other hand, his Majesty said he was afraid the Czarina's personal resentment against the Prince Successor of Sweden, might engage her in some violent measures; and hoped the King would join his good offices with theirs in endeavouring to keep that Princess within bounds.

In spite of a revulsion of feeling on the part of Maria Theresa, so creditable to the conciliatory powers of Mr. Keith, and of those courtier-like epistles of the Duke of Newcastle, in which (no doubt to the reader's amusement) the "*heart*" of the wily *Premier* is made to play so conspicuous a part, fresh subjects of "*aigreur*" and "*misunderstanding*" continually arose. Yet it is an additional proof of the homage ultimately rendered

by one lofty and upright mind to similar qualities in another, that Maria Theresa, notwithstanding Mr. Keith's residence at her Court was frequently embittered, by the necessity of communicating, in terms "softened by the natural courtesy and urbanity of the ambassador," arrogant and peremptory despatches from the British Court,—entertained a peculiar and distinguished regard for the person of the English minister; which she testified on all occasions, during his nine years' sojourn; and of which, on his departure (though it took place under the painful circumstances of a political rupture with his Court), substantial tokens have descended to posterity, in the form of a portrait, for which she personally and specially sat, and of splendid dresses, embroidered under her own directions by the nuns of the convent she patronised, as presents from her to the ambassador's three daughters.

Nor, though Mr. Keith often declined delivering the harsh and haughty messages which he was ordered to communicate to the Empress *in person*,* and thus, says Coxe, "more than once incurred the censure of the British ministry for his delicacy and good sense," did he seek to conciliate the favour of that Princess by any undue concessions, or any compromise of the honour of his own sovereign, or even of his own honest sentiments. On the contrary, when the celebrated Prince Kaunitz had worked on the Empress-queen, by means of her inveterate dislike to Prussia, to enter into a negotiation with France, and abandon, in defiance of the opinion of her husband and the other members of her family, her hitherto close relations with the maritime powers; and when, amidst the utmost affability

* On one occasion when her very *interesting* situation rendered any agitation highly dangerous.

and personal condescension, she announced the fact to Mr. Keith, "affecting to disbelieve that the Empress could connect herself with the inveterate enemy of her person and family, the British minister declared that nothing would convince him of such an alliance, till he saw with his own eyes the signature of '*Maria Theresa*' at the bottom of a treaty with that Crown." "I am," she replied, "far from being French in my dispositions, and do not deny that the Court of Versailles has been my bitter enemy; but I cannot conceal that the cessions which Great Britain extorted from me, at the peace of Dresden and of Aix la Chapelle, have totally disabled me." The British minister exclaimed, "Will you, the Empress and Archduchess, so far humble yourself, as to throw yourself into the arms of France?" "Not into the arms," she hastily rejoined, "but on the side of France." The Empress listened with great affability to the remonstrances and arguments of the British minister, but remained unskaken in her resolution.* Yet even this wide discrepancy in opinion, and bold assertion of his country's ancient claims on the gratitude and alliance of Austria, failed to impair the friendly sentiments entertained by her of the honest envoy, afterwards expressed to, and continued towards, his son.

In July, 1757, the avowed coalition between Austria and France, and active hostilities entered upon by the latter power, led to the recall from London of the Austrian minister; and, as a necessary consequence, the departure from Vienna of the British resident there. The notes which passed on the occasion, betwixt the personal friends, though political opponents, Mr. Keith and Count Kaunitz, have been preserved, and do credit to the feelings of both.

* Coxe's History of the House of Austria, vol. v.

MR. KEITH TO THE COUNT KAUNITZ.

Vienna, July 22nd, 1757.

SIR,

I have just received my letters of recall, the natural consequence of those of the Count Colloredo; and am preparing to quit Vienna as soon as possible. This being the case, I hope your Excellency will have the goodness to expedite the necessary passports for myself, my servants, and baggage, &c.

With regard to the present situation of public affairs, I shall content myself with saying that it is one which I had no share in producing, and which I sincerely regret. But there is one circumstance connected with it which gives me great pain; viz., that I find myself thereby deprived of the honour of offering, in person, to her Majesty the Empress-queen, my very humble and respectful acknowledgments for all the tokens of her goodness with which it has pleased her Majesty to honour me during my residence at her court; a goodness of which I shall cherish an eternal remembrance, accompanied by the liveliest gratitude.

I also avail myself, Sir, of the present opportunity, to thank your Excellency for all your civilities, and to assure you that I have the honour to remain, with the most perfect respect, &c.

ROBERT KEITH.

THE COUNT DE KAUNITZ TO MR. KEITH.*

Vienna, July 26th, 1757.

SIR,

You will herewith receive the passports you have requested. I have the satisfaction to be able to assure you, at the same time, that her Majesty renders,

* Translated from the original in French.

to the manner in which you have acquitted yourself of your duties during the entire duration of your ministry at this Court, all the justice which is due to it; and that she will ever recall the remembrance of it with pleasure. I have the orders to make this known to you, and I fulfil them with all the pleasure which I shall at all times experience in having the opportunity of proving to you the sincere consideration with which I have the honour to be,

Le Comte de Kaunitz.

It is pleasing to think that these courtly expressions were not, either in the sovereign or her distinguished minister, mere words of idle compliment. Ten years after, when Sir Robert Murray Keith paid a visit to Vienna, on his way from Dresden to Copenhagen, the Empress-queen, and her whole family, testified the liveliest interest in all that regarded his "worthy father;" and Prince Kaunitz, albeit little wont to show courtesy to any one, called for a bumper to the health of his "worthy and amiable friend, Old Keith."

A token of reciprocal good-will towards a man afterwards so distinguished in the annals of European diplomacy, exists in one of the very few letters preserved, from Mr. Keith, written seven years previous to the above (when its subject was comparatively unknown), recommending Count Kaunitz to his countryman the Earl of Albemarle, then ambassador at Paris.

Vienna, March 14th, 1750.

My Lord,

I have been honoured with your Excellency's letter of the 10th of February, inclosing one to his Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, which shall be

forwarded to him by the first occasion; in the meantime I cannot help reproaching your Lordship for your unkindness, in making excuses for giving me the trouble (as you call it) of that letter. You know that you have every title to any small service I can possibly do you; and I am sure you do me the justice to believe that nothing would give me more pleasure than any opportunity of being really of use to you, or any of your friends.

Count Kaunitz, who proposes to set out for Paris about the beginning of May, has frequently desired me to make his compliments to your Excellency. You will find him a very *reasonable*, and a very *practicable man;* and I know he proposes a particular satisfaction to himself, in living with you in the most amicable manner, and in the most perfect confidence.

Your Exellency's, &c.,

Robert Keith.

It was from the period of this embassy, that the French predilections of this celebrated individual may be chiefly dated, as well as that avowed ascendancy in the Imperial councils, to which, during the residence both of Mr. Keith and his son, so much of difficulty in maintaining the interests of England may be ascribed.

Before his departure he had affected great enthusiasm for the ancient connections of the House of Austria, and had become the channel of a secret correspondence between the Empress and the British minister, of which Mr. Keith thus writes :—"The Empress approved this mode, and said, 'I consent without hesitation to the proposal of Count Kaunitz. I am happy in giving you a convincing proof of my confidence, and I hope you will consider it in that light, as you are the *only person* who has, or shall have, a correspondence of that nature.'"

Of the importance attached to the negotiations in which Mr. Keith had so long and faithfully laboured, by his superiors, and brother diplomatists, we have had various notices. Of the light in which they were regarded by himself, while yet in progress, as well as of his opinions on widely differing topics, and a picture of his situation, while a resident at the Imperial Court, a relic survives, in an autograph letter from the veteran negotiator, to that distinguished retired soldier, (his connection by marriage) the Earl of Balcarres.*

Vienna, December 2nd, 1753.

My Lord,

I am so much ashamed of my behaviour towards your Lordship, as a correspondent, that I should hardly have ventured to write to you at all, if I had not the happiness of having so powerful a mediator as my Lady Dalrymple † to intercede for me; but I trust so much to her interest with your Lordship, and to her goodness for me, that, in place of writing bad excuses for my silence, I will trust entirely to her good offices for my pardon.

Your Lordship's occupations and mine are so very different, that they appear at first sight to have no connection together. But when your Lordship considers that, upon that very balance of power which you talk of as chimerical, the liberty of Europe, and, consequently, the security of our island, depends, you will find that the enjoyment of the fruit of your labours, as well as of every other branch of your property, can be no otherwise effectually secured; and in that light I

* A nobleman of whom so many interesting notices are given by his descendant in the "Lives of the Lindsays."

† Sister-in-law to Mr. Keith, and mother-in-law to the Earl.

should think myself very happy if by my poor endeavours I could contribute in any degree to establish it upon a solid and lasting basis. And the other point you mention, viz., the election of the King of the Romans, is a measure so necessary for that purpose, that no pains or expense ought to be spared for carrying it into execution; and though that affair has hung over so long, I am not without hopes, one day or other, to see it brought to a happy conclusion.

Your Lordship's alliance into a family with which my own is so closely connected,* and which is so dear to me, has, I think, made me love you, if possible, a little more than I did before; but neither that nor anything else could add to the good opinion, the esteem, and the sincere regard, which I always had for you; and it is one of the things for which I regret my absence from home, that I cannot improve the opportunity of cultivating your connection and friendship, which the circumstances of our alliance would afford me. But I flatter myself that if my Royal Master continues to approve of my zealous endeavours in his service, I may hope to find myself in a condition to pass the latter part of my life with ease, and perhaps to do something for my children. In the meantime, I live as agreeably here as I could wish. I have the honour to receive many obliging marks of distinction from their Imperial Majesties. I am admitted into the best companies, and I have health and gaiety enough left to take my share in the pleasures which this Court affords.

The happiness you enjoy in the company of so agreeable a woman as Lady Balcarres, and the easy circumstances of your fortune, are, and will always be,

* The Earl had united himself to Miss Dalrymple, daughter to Sir Robert Dalrymple, whose wife was sister-in-law to Mr. Keith.

the sources of real satisfaction; and the reasonable use you make of the accession of riches, which fortune has thrown in your way, to improve your estate, both in quality and beauty, is not only a solid advantage to your family, but a general benefit to the nation. The account you give of the thriving condition of our country gives me great satisfaction; and I hope the effects of national wealth and improvement will be national contentment and happiness.

I give you joy with all my heart on the rapid increase of your family; and I hope you will still live many years, to beget children and plant trees—the first for the service, the last for the ornament, of Scotland.* When, or if ever, I shall have the happiness of seeing that country, or your Lordship, I cannot say; but I think I may venture to affirm that no man wishes the prosperity of my country more sincerely than myself, and that no man can be, with more sincerity and regard, than I am, my Lord Balcarres's

Most humble and most obedient servant,

ROBERT KEITH.

However undesirable might be, in comparison with the state of things described in this letter, the distant and then semi-barbarous Court of Petersburgh, the immediate transfer thither of the services of Mr. Keith, when no longer available at Vienna, affords a proof that they were at least sufficiently appreciated by the Government at home to be put into instant requisition. His

* The wish was doubly realised. Eight sons of Lord Balcarres survived to fill, with credit and honour, important military, civil, and religious appointments in their country's service; while the "trees" alluded to cast their venerable shade over succeeding generations, not less worthy of the noble ancestry from whence they sprung.

public transactions in that remote sphere would be too far removed by time and distance, to be generally interesting, had they not become by circumstances involved with the fates of some of the greatest, as well as most unfortunate of his contemporaries.

He arrived at Petersburgh in March, 1758, and in his very first despatch notifies the arrest and disgrace of the Great Chancellor Bestucheff, and other officers of the Court. Matters were not for some days in train for him to obtain even his audience of the Empress. When he did so, the contrast between the stiff ceremonial of the northern Court, the previous "discourse" he was desired to "prepare," and the answer, *by proxy*, returned to it, according to usage, by the sovereign, must have formed a painful contrast to his many amicable conversations, and even occasional "political quarrels" (as she afterwards playfully styled them to his son) with the accomplished Maria Theresa. "I made my bows, and retired," he says, "without a word having passed on either side, which I am informed is the etiquette of this Court."

Of its politics on his arrival, Mr. Keith gives the following sketch, extracted as bearing on the future history of the celebrated Catherine the Second; and proving, as does the whole correspondence, that so far from being (as, from his subsequent high favour with her unhappy husband, was afterwards groundlessly insinuated) inimical to her, the British Ambassador, with the chivalry of his nation, was from the first disposed not only to compassionate but assist her.

"The disgrace of the Chancellor," he says, "had been long contriving by his enemies at Court; and the immediate pretence for it was, his having entered into some intrigues with the Grand Duchess. And the affair was pushed with the more vivacity, as is pretended,

upon the French party's hearing of my coming near this place; and what confirmed this opinion was Bestucheff's being arrested on the very day that the account arrived here of my being come to Riga. But be that as it will, I found, on my arrival, the French party in possession of the whole credit at Court, and the two Ambassadors, Count Esterhazi and Marquis de l'Hôpital, giving law to both Court and town. They have likewise got the Grand Duke absolutely in their power, having, in order thereto, alienated his affections from the Grand Duchess, who used to have great influence over him; and it is supposed that one Brokdorff has been the instrument of this change, who ingratiated himself with his Imperial Highness, by encouraging him in all sorts of debauches, in which light the Grand Duchess had complained of him to the Empress some time before. But *unfortunately* her complaints were not listened to, her enemies having taken care, by false suggestions, to give the Empress bad impressions of her Imperial Highness, so that at present she is far from being well at Court."

That compassion for the future Empress did not blind Mr. Keith to her indiscretions, appears in the following hint:—"The poor Grand Duchess is still in distress, Count Poniatowski is involved in some way or other in the late intrigues, and it is thought he will not remain long at this Court; and indeed, in my opinion, he had better never have *come to it* in the *shape he did*."

"As to the Great Duchess, she has been all along in great distress. Ill with the Empress, and still worse with the Grand Duke, she received the other day a very sensible mortification, one of her favourite bedchamber women having been taken from her and put under arrest. This, I hear, occasioned an interview between the Empress and the Duchess, about four days ago,

in which, after some sharp reproofs on one side, and warm expostulations on the other, her Imperial Highness fell at the Empress's feet, and told her, that since she had been so unfortunate as to incur her displeasure, though innocently, and had thereby drawn upon herself so many and such sensible mortifications as, joined to family quarrels, made her life a burden to her, she had but one favour to ask, viz., that her Majesty would allow her to retire out of Russia, and to pass the rest of her life with her mother; assuring the Empress, at the same time, that if his Majesty should think it for the interest of the empire that the Great Duke should take another wife, neither she nor any of her family would make the smallest objection to it. The Empress, they say, was greatly affected with this discourse, and talked with much more softness than before to the Grand Duchess, entering into several particulars with a greater air of kindness than she had done for a long while past. And when, in the conversation, her Imperial Highness was beginning to touch upon some things regarding the Grand Duke's unkindness (who was present), the Empress made her a sign to hold her tongue, and in a low voice said that she must have a conversation with her alone, and that it should be very soon. It was thought Wednesday last was the day appointed for it, as her Majesty, whose heart is at bottom both good and tender,* was to take the sacrament that day. It is hoped a reconciliation may have been the consequence of that meeting, and certainly the generality of people wish it very sincerely, the Great Duchess having many friends among those of the first rank."

* Of this Empress (Elizabeth) Coxe says that she "displayed a motley mixture of the weakness, devotion, and voluptuousness, which had been the grand characteristics of her life. Her favourite," he adds, "was devoted to France, but some of her *leading ministers*, to England."

"*May 30th*, 1758.

"On Sunday evening there was an *appartement* at Court, when the Empress appeared for the first time since I have been at Petersburgh; and her Majesty, after having talked to the Grand Duke and Duchess, was pleased to come up to me, and entertained me in a very gracious manner for half a quarter of an hour. Her Majesty appeared in perfect health, and there was no mark left of the fluxion on her eye, which had so long prevented her from appearing in public. The Empress stood a good while by the Grand Duchess's chair, who was at play, and had a good deal of chat with her in a very cheerful and cordial way.

"The measures of this Court will, I believe, be determined by the good or bad success of the King of Prussia's arms against the Empress-queen. I have reason to think they are weary of the war, and I know they have not a shilling to rub upon another. Count Woronzow, (who had been invisible to the foreign ministers,) appeared on Saturday, and he made me dine with him *en famille*, the first time I have been invited to that or any other Russian table."

Though the advances thus made by the great Chancellor of Russia were improved during the following year into great apparent political intimacy with Mr. Keith, who appears ably to have turned to account all the opportunities then afforded, to cultivate a good understanding between the Courts of Britain, Petersburgh, and Berlin, the slender prospect of utility arising from his hyperborean exile induced him thus to solicit his recall:—

MR. KEITH TO THE EARL OF HOLDERNESSE.

St. Petersburgh, May 2-13, 1760.

My Lord,

The season of the year advancing very fast, and the summer being very short in this country, I must beg leave to put your Lordship in mind of what I formerly hinted to you, of my desire of returning home. Your Lordship knows that I accepted of this commission merely in obedience to his Majesty's commands, and at the desire of the Duke of Newcastle and your Lordship, but upon the condition that it should not last above two or three years at most. That term will now be very soon elapsed, and which is worse, without my having been of any use to his Majesty's service in this post, which, whatever defects I may otherwise have, has not been owing either to want of diligence or zeal.* Probably the situation of affairs at this Court on my arrival, and since, would have made it difficult for a much abler minister to succeed; but, however that may be, I see very little hopes of things mending here for some time, and consequently there is no danger to the King's service in any respect by my being recalled, especially as your Lordship has a whole summer before you to choose one to come in my place. But, beside the above, your Lordship may easily think that at my age

* This must have been rendered apparent to his superiors (by whom his recall was happily refused, till opportunities of rendering to his country, and its ally, the King of Prussia, very *eminent services*, were opened by a new reign) by the frequent though ineffectual arguments in favour of peace with the former, and remonstrances in behalf of the latter (whose *kingdom* it sounds strange to us to hear that Russia then *seriously* talked of "*taking and retaining for herself*") which all the previous despatches of the British minister contain.

it is very natural to wish for a retreat, and to return to my family, which I have now been absent from near twenty years. The consideration of health is likewise of some weight, though I shall never hesitate to expose that, or my life itself, for the service of so gracious a master; and two attacks of fever which I had last winter, make me dread the approach of that season. All these reasons, joined to your ordinary indulgence for me, will induce your Lordship, I hope, to use your good offices with the King in my behalf, and to prevail upon his Majesty to condescend to grant my request. When your Lordship informed me some time ago that his Majesty had been pleased to intrust me with credit for a large sum of money,* you forgot to mention in whose hands the money was lodged; I must therefore beg the favour to know upon whom I may draw, if occasion should require: I mean only for such gratifications as I may judge it necessary to make, from time to time, to particular persons; for, as I said then, I see not the smallest appearance, at present, of laying out considerable sums to any advantage. I beg leave, before I end this letter, to recommend to your Lordship's protection my two sons. What they wish for themselves is, the rank of lieutenant-colonel for the eldest, and a port ship for the sailor; and I would fain hope that, by the assistance of your Lordship, they may obtain their wishes before the war ends; for if they should not, they would have no hold of anything, and have their fortune to begin again, as much as if they had never served.†

* £100,000 had been placed at Mr. Keith's disposal.

† The letter addressed to Mr. Keith by Mr. Pitt, about this period, shows that the request regarding these promotions was most readily granted (if not indeed anticipated by that great minister) and that on the ground of acknowledged desert on the part of the sons as well as

I have one reason which makes me hope for success in my request to retire, viz., that it is the first favour that ever I asked for myself; for I can venture to say, and I appeal for the truth of it to all my Secretaries of State, that in the course of twenty years that I have served the Crown, I never desired increase of honours or appointments, I never asked for any employment, nor ever refused any, when it was thought I could be of use to the service of my Royal Master.

If your Lordship will be so good as use your credit with his Majesty for my obtaining this request, I shall consider it a most particular favour, and it will add to the respect with which I always am, &c.,

R. Keith.

That the situation of a foreign minister, even when most highly accredited by superiors at home, and monarchs abroad, is no bed of roses, abundant proof will occur in the course of the following correspondence. The hints of discomfort thrown out by many a veteran diplomatist, find full and touching expression in a letter about to be given from an old and highly-esteemed public servant; which, however confidential in its original tenor, may now be freely brought forward, both as throwing light on an important and doubtful point of British policy, (the withholding of the subsidy from, and consequent alienation of the King of Prussia), and bearing on transactions during which, as the monarch's own letters will show, the great Frederick conceived himself to have incurred obligations to Mr. Keith,

the parent. The denial, or at least evasion, of Mr. Keith's request to be recalled, so frequently renewed, opened to his talents the influential sphere which Russia had hitherto failed to present to his tried experience in negotiations.

which, throughout his remaining life, he omitted no opportunity to acknowledge.

The perusal of the previous correspondence of years from Petersburgh (much of which passed through the English minister's hands at Berlin) shows the gratitude, so freely expressed, to have been eminently due to Mr. Keith for his long and disinterested support, both as the ally of England, and from personal respect for his heroic qualities, of the then depressed and well nigh overwhelmed Prussian monarch. It was natural, therefore, for the writer of the following indignant epistle to conclude that its tenor, as severing the long ties of friendship between the crowns of England and Prussia, would be nearly as unwelcome to Mr. Keith as to himself. In 1762, Sir Andrew Mitchell, who had spent a lifetime as representative of Great Britain at the Court of Prussia, thus writes to the English minister at Petersburgh :—

Breslau, June 9th.

My dear Sir,

This goes by Walker, the messenger, who has brought me an answer to my despatch of the 4th of May, and I will not detain him to give you a *précis*, because I imagine they will have sent you a copy of that most *extraordinary piece*. If they have not, let me know, and you shall, by the first sure opportunity, have a fair account of it. The *news*,* your own letters will give you, and I fancy it will be as unpalatable to you as it is to me. We must, however, obey, and do our best; we are indeed the *servi servorum*, the beasts of burden that must go as they are driven. *Je suis las de mon s—— métier; mais des considérations réfléchies m'empêchent de prendre encore aucune résolution subite.*

* Of the refusal to continue the subsidy.

Aidez moi, je vous prie, mon cher ami, de vos conseils; la santé me manque, et la situation des affaires m'accable de tristesse.

A letter I have received from General Yorke,* of the 1st instant, pleases me much; I see he is sincerely affected with what has happened. He says he hears much of a peace, but knows nothing certain about it; the reports here are still more vague than elsewhere. It is said a certain minister,† now in the Duke of Newcastle's place, will have peace *at any rate*. I heartily wish it may be a good one, but I very much fear the means we are pursuing will not lead us to such an one, and I cannot help dreading the worst, unless we should choose the shameful part of inactivity; and imitate that ignominious campaign of 1757, which I could wish blotted from the history of England.

I have one solid comfort in the midst of my most distressful situation; which is, that I have done my duty fairly, honestly, and freely, without consulting to please, or acquire friends. I have sacrificed my ambition to the public weal. I have, in some measure, regained the confidence of the hero, with whom I live; and he hears from me what, perhaps, he would not have patience to do from another. This is, in truth, the reason why I remain here. I do not think it impossible I may be recalled, though I have not asked it. I shall retire with pleasure; for I am well able to justify everything I have done. I heartily wish every man concerned in public business were in the same happy situation.

I have profited of this opportunity to pour out my soul to you; it affords me consolation, and I have only

* Better known as Sir Joseph Yorke, the able ambassador at the Hague.

† The Earl of Bute.

to desire that when you have read this letter, you will commit it to the flames, and write to me by Prussian courier, or otherwise, as often as you can. I ever am, with the most sincere affection,

ANDREW MITCHELL.

P. S.—When I think of our master, all the sentiments of tenderness, duty and affection, rise up in my mind. I am afflicted beyond measure. In case you should have had no copy of the *memorable* answer to my dispatch of the 4th May, I must acquaint you, that no subsidy is granted for this year, to the King of Prussia! The reasons are indeed extraordinary; palliate this as well as you can. One day or other, I hope to communicate to you the true one, which I think I have, by chance, discovered. A. M.

It was during the period of gradual estrangement on the part of that monarch from the friendship and alliance of England, which the measures of the new ministry had created, and which ended in the rupture above alluded to, that a correspondence (under the circumstances, peculiarly flattering) took place between the Great Frederick and Mr. Keith; the more honourable to the latter, that while supporting with his interest (at that time paramount with the youthful Emperor of Russia) the legitimate views of peace of the Prussian sovereign, he was above purchasing a continuance of his favour by any compromise of the just claims of England, and was quite prepared to vindicate her policy (as regarded the defence of Portugal especially) even against so redoubtable, as well as courteous an antagonist.

THE KING OF PRUSSIA TO MR. KEITH.*

Breslau, 18th February, 1762.

Sir,

Feelingly alive as I am to all the proofs of affection and attachment which you have hitherto shewn me, I have resolved no longer to delay expressing my gratitude. I beg you to be persuaded that I shall ever give you credit for them; and that I shall seize with pleasure all the opportunities which may present themselves, to give you convincing proofs of my esteem. In the meantime, you will oblige me by delivering the inclosed to my colonel, Baron de Goltz, who will arrive ere long † at the Court where you are. And I humbly pray God to have you, Sir, in his high and holy keeping.

Frederick.

That the King of Prussia, at the most depressed and critical period in his affairs, had a staunch defender at the then hostile Court of Petersburgh in Mr. Keith, appears from a very interesting conversation held by the latter with the Chancellor of the Empire, Count Shouwaloff, on the politics of Europe. On the proposal, already alluded to, of Russia assuming and retaining possession of Prussia, the British Minister thus writes:—"In that case I could assure him that the war was not near an end; for that I mistook the King of Prussia's character greatly, if that prince would not choose to lay himself under the *ruins of his last town*,

* Translated from the French originals in the possession of the Earl of Hardwicke.

† On a mission connected with the peace with Russia, which Mr. Keith was mainly instrumental in concluding.

rather than submit to such ignominious conditions. I said further, that their keeping that province would be a perpetual object of jealousy to other powers, and a source of troubles in Europe, as there was not a single power in it, but had an essential interest in preventing it; or if by some great fatality it could not, at present, be hindered, to join with the rest in laying hold of the first opportunity of wresting it out of their hands. Monsieur Shouwaloff, again, could not see that the possession of so '*small a province,*' should give jealousy to the rest of Europe; ending with this, that it might at least be left in their hands, as a *deposit,* till other means of indemnification could be found. I replied, that neither keeping it in possession, or deposit, was even to be thought of; and that, if either of them were ever seriously proposed, it would give cause of jealousy to all the world; as it would indicate clearly a design in Russia to make herself mistress of the navigation of the Baltic, and, consequently, to engross to herself the whole commerce of the North; to which I added, smiling, the late design of seizing the city of Dantzick, evidently pointed."

The extent of the obligations to Mr. Keith's influence with the new Emperor of Russia, which the King of Prussia so amply and readily acknowledged, may be gathered from the letter announcing the first step of a then auspicious reign.

MR. KEITH TO THE EARL OF HOLDERNESSE.

Petersburgh, Dec. 28th—Jan. 8th—1761-2.

My Lord,

In my letter of the 5th, which goes likewise by this courier, I informed your Lordship of the death

of the late Empress, and of the accession of the present Emperor* to the throne. I am now to acquaint you that the same evening that the Empress died, Baron Lefort, great master of the ceremonies, came to my house (as he did to those of the other foreign ministers), and let us know that the next morning the Emperor and Empress would receive our compliments in the gallery at Court, *sans cérémonie*. I went to Court next morning accordingly, and their Majesties, appearing together, received us most graciously; and we had afterwards the honour of dining with them at a table of an hundred covers, where everybody (not excepting the Emperor and Empress) drew for their places. But what I principally write this for, is to apprise your Lordship that the Emperor (who has always honoured me with his good graces) came up to me in the circle, and told me in my ear that *he hoped I would be pleased with him,* as the *night before* he had despatched couriers to the several bodies of his army, with orders not to advance farther into the Prussian territory, and to abstain from all hostility. I have been since told that those orders were accompanied with directions to the respective commanding generals to agree to an armistice, if proposed by the Prussians. It is farther said, that General Czernicheff has particular orders to separate his corps from the Austrians, and, before he begins his march, to send a trumpet to the Austrian head-quarters, to let them know that he was marching back with the troops under his command, without committing the smallest act of hostility.

The courier being upon the point of setting out, I have only time to add my compliments of congratulation to your Lordship upon this happy turn of affairs;

* The unfortunate Peter III., the husband of Catharine II.

by the means of which I hope the King of Prussia will get happily out of the war, and his Majesty be able to put an end to his particular quarrel with France, in a way glorious to himself and advantageous to his people. I should be glad to have your Lordship's orders as soon as possible, as I should think this no unfavourable time to bring the treaty of commerce on the carpet. I have reason to think that the Emperor is greatly animated against the Court of Denmark, insomuch that it is to be feared that if means are not found to soften him, he may proceed to extremities against them. I think it absolutely necessary for the King's service, that I should have credit for some money, to be properly disposed of.

I have the honour, &c.,

R. K.

MR. KEITH TO THE EARL OF BUTE.

St. Petersburgh, January 12th, 1762.

My Lord,

Things go on here in the same favourable course as they did when I had last the honour of writing to your Lordship; and the Emperor makes no secret of his intentions of bringing about a peace upon just and reasonable terms. His Imperial Majesty, upon every occasion, expresses a dislike to France, and to everything that comes from France; and as a proof of it, the whole company of French comedians are discharged from the service of the Court.

Before the Adjutant-general Godowitz set out on his mission to the King of Prussia,* the Emperor was

* With an amicable notification of the Emperor's accession to the throne.

graciously pleased to send that gentleman to me, in order to know if I had any particular commands for him. It happened that when he called, I was just gone from home, to stand godfather at the christening of a child of one of our merchants; and my servants having directed him into the room where all the company was met, he told me, before them, that he was come with a message to me from the Emperor; upon which I took him into another room, and he having delivered his message as above, I replied that I had nothing to add to what I had said in a letter to Mr. Mitchell, with which I knew he was charged; but that I could assure him he would find that minister willing and ready to serve him in every shape; and that he might open himself to him without reserve, he being a person of sense and honour. At taking leave I did not fail to charge him with my humble acknowledgments to the Emperor for this mark of his grace and confidence. Your Lordship may easily imagine that the company was a little surprised at this extraordinary visit; and as there were thirty men and women present, the thing could not fail of being soon whispered all over the town, and consequently to give occasion to much discourse and to various speculations. I cannot say that I approved of all the particulars of Monsieur Godowitz's instructions; but I am persuaded that, in the main, they are such as we could wish them: and, indeed, I own that my hopes rise daily with regard to public affairs; and, in the meantime, I hear that the Imperial ambassador and Monsieur Bréteuil are greatly disconcerted, and cannot conceal their uneasiness.

With respect to the interior of the empire, it was impossible for his Imperial Majesty to conduct himself more wisely, or with more dignity, than he has done in every step of his government; the favours he has

bestowed have been, in general, upon very worthy subjects, and in the most gracious manner; and no one hardship, of any kind, has been put upon any one person, the few that have lost their places having fallen in the gentlest manner. Old Count Lestock was sent for from his exile the very evening of the accession. Count Horst, since his release, has received a thousand marks of the Emperor's favour: he has had the honour of dining with him, and had a sword sent him by his Majesty, with this message, that it was Prussian, and that he had worn it himself several times.

MR. KEITH TO THE EARL OF BUTE.

St. Petersburgh, January 26th, 1762.

My Lord,

I did not intend to give your Lordship any trouble by this post, but the Emperor having done me the unexpected honour of a visit this afternoon, I could not help apprising your Lordship of it, and I have the pleasure of acquainting you at the same time, that his Imperial Majesty expressed in the strongest terms his friendship for our Royal Master, and his resolution of connecting himself in the strictest manner with the King and his Prussian Majesty; but I defer the particular account of our conversation till I write by Collins, who (by concert with the Emperor) is to set out on Saturday next. His Imperial Majesty fixed upon that day, as he was pleased to invite himself to supper at my house for Friday evening, and that perhaps he might think of some new orders to give me upon that occasion.

But here I must not omit apprising your Lordship of a most noble action of the Emperor's, who, having gone for the first time in great state to the senate, on

Thursday last, did there declare the nobility and gentry of Russia to be free, and in every respect on the same footing with the nobility of the other kingdoms of Europe, with liberty to enter or not into the service of any foreign state, without the permission of the Emperor, or his successors to the throne. Your Lordship may easily imagine the astonishment and pleasure with which the nobility received this royal boon, and the inward satisfaction with which they must have felt themselves from slaves at once become freemen, and really gentlemen. The Emperor, in gratifying that rank of his subjects, did not forget the lower part of his people, for he, at the same time, reduced the price of salt to a moderate price; and by a pragmatic, irrevocable sanction, declared that it shall never exceed the price now fixed. This will be a considerable diminution of his revenue; but his Imperial Majesty could have done nothing of such consequence for the ease and relief of the poor. This magnanimity and generosity cannot fail of gaining the hearts of his people, and will at the same time raise his Imperial Majesty's character to the highest degree in the eyes of all the nations of Europe.

January 29th, 1762.

The Emperor goes on in doing good to particular persons, and in conferring the greatest benefits upon his people. His last act of abolishing the private Chancery, or Inquisition of State, is looked upon as the greatest blessing that could have happened to the nation; that abominable tribunal being in all respects as bad, and in some worse, than the Spanish Inquisition.

P. S.—I cannot yet pretend to give your Lordship a true view of the interior of this new Court; in the

meantime, it does not appear that the Empress is hitherto much consulted in business.*

It has been seen that Baron de Goltz had been sent on a pacific mission by the King of Prussia, to the new Emperor's Court, under Mr. Keith's auspices. Of the facilities procured for him, and the success of his overture, we have the following account, dated February 28th, 1762:—

"Baron Goltz has had the opportunity of several conversations with the Emperor, and yesterday morning his Majesty told him he wished to conclude the peace with the King his master, as soon as possibly could be; and that he wished his Prussian Majesty would transmit hither a plan of a treaty for that purpose: to which Monsieur Goltz answered, that he being actually provided with full powers, he thought it might be a saving of time if his Imperial Majesty would be pleased to communicate his thoughts upon the subject. To this the Emperor replied, with great frankness and generosity, that he would restore every inch of ground conquered by the Russian arms; and upon Monsieur Goltz's insinuating that the King his master would expect the guarantee of Silesia, the Emperor appeared willing to agree to it, saying, however, that he should expect, in return, his Prussian Majesty's guarantee for his ducal dominions.†

* A significant remark, as connected with what followed.

† The question now so recently agitated, similarly occupied at that time the public mind of Europe. Shortly before the Emperor's accession, Mr. Keith had thus written on the subject:—

"The affair of Holstein is now put upon quite a new footing, for in place of the exchange of the Grand Duke's part of that Duchy against Oldenburg, what Denmark now proposes is, that by the mediation of the Courts of Vienna and Paris which this Court makes her hope for,

"As Col. Goltz is resolved to sign upon these terms, I think it not impossible that this important affair may be carried into execution in a few days. This news appeared to me of so much consequence, that I thought it proper to transmit it by Estafette to Berlin.

"I had the honour of his Imperial Majesty's company yesterday at dinner at my house; he having been pleased to invite himself, upon hearing that the two princes of Holstein, with some others of the great people, had made a party to eat soup with me."

"*March* 23*rd*.

"On Sunday morning last, just before mass, I had the honour to be admitted to an audience of the Emperor, and in delivering his Majesty's letter, I made the King's compliments to his Imperial Majesty as nearly as I could in the terms of my instructions, and I ended by saying, that the King wished the first step of his Imperial Majesty's reign might be the restoring the public tranquillity, that he might thereby acquire the glorious title of the peace-maker of Europe.

"The King's compliments were received with great satisfaction and cordiality. His Imperial Majesty said he was particularly obliged to the King for his friendly wishes; that he should think himself happy to deserve that title, and was ready to contribute all in his power towards accomplishing that great and salutary work.

the Great Duke shall make over to his Danish Majesty all that he possesses in Holstein, and renounce all his pretensions upon Sleswick; in consideration of which, the King of Denmark will take upon himself all the debts his Imperial Highness has contracted upon Holstein, will lay him down instantly one hundred and fifty thousand roubles, and pay him an hundred thousand every year, till the Grand Duke shall mount the throne of Russia. I do not hear that his Imperial Highness has yet come into these proposals, and I believe it is not very certain that he ever will."

"The company at dinner consisted of near forty persons, ladies and gentlemen, and in the middle of the first service, his Imperial Majesty drank the King of Prussia's health, as chief of the order of the Black Eagle, * in a *Bocal*, † which went round the company, under a discharge of fifty pieces of cannon. Towards the end of dinner, the Emperor stood up, with a *Bocal* in his hand, and addressing himself to me, said, he was going to propose the best health in the world to me, viz.:—a general and happy peace,—which was drunk by all the company, I believe with real satisfaction: and as the toast had been addressed to me, I rose, and going behind the Emperor's chair, with the glass in my hand, which I drank off, I returned my humble thanks for the health, and for the honour his Imperial Majesty had done me in addressing it to me."

THE KING OF PRUSSIA TO MR. KEITH.

Breslau, March 24th, 1762.

Sir,

The sentiments of affection and attachment, of which your letter of the 15th contains the renewed expression, are infinitely agreeable to me. I *know their value;* and shall not fail to proportion my gratitude. It were to be wished that all the ministers of Britain were animated with the same zeal for my interests, and that they felt, like yourself, their intimate connexion with those of their master, and that they cannot be neglected without prejudice, at the same time, to those of his Britannic Majesty. It appears to me, however, that the affairs of Portugal have unhappily done injury to those of Germany, in the heads of some of the

* He had that day received the insignia of the Order from the King of Prussia. † A large goblet used for drinking peculiar healths.

Ministry; and I suspect they will discover, but too late, the illusion they have created to themselves on that head. As for yourself, Sir, I have a better opinion of your enlightened mind; and every reason to flatter myself that you will never suffer yourself to be influenced on this subject; and that feeling all the inconsistency of such principles, you will continue, as in past times, to have my interests at heart, and to assist with your good counsels the Baron de Goltz, in the important commission with which I have charged him at the Court where you reside.

I am delighted that you are pleased with his conduct; and I trust he will do all in his power to deserve your friendship, which I beg of you to continue towards him; and to be persuaded that I shall eagerly embrace every occasion that may present itself, to requite the obligation, and to prove to you the reality of my esteem for a minister who is so *worthy of it as yourself.*

Wherefore I pray God, &c.,

FREDERICK.

MR. KEITH TO THE KING OF PRUSSIA, IN REPLY.

Petersburgh, April 28th—May 9th, 1762.

SIR,

I take the liberty of laying myself at the feet of your Majesty, with my very sincere congratulations on the conclusion of the peace between your Majesty and your august friend, the Emperor of Russia; and I hope that this grand event will enable your Majesty to resist with advantage all your enemies, and serve at the same time as the first step towards that general tranquillity of which Europe stands so much in need. I avail myself also of this opportunity to return my thanks to your Majesty for the last letter you were

good enough to write to me; which did me the highest honour, by the tokens of benignity with which it was filled, and to which I should not have failed to make an earlier reply, had I not feared to become troublesome by unnecessarily multiplying my letters.

With regard to what your Majesty is pleased to remark in your's respecting Portugal, your Majesty is too well informed of our relations with that country, and the advantages we derive from its commerce, to be surprised to see us strain every nerve to maintain its independence. I am persuaded, however, that this will not prevent our Court from fulfilling its engagements with all its allies; and especially with your Majesty, whose heroic virtues are objects of veneration to the entire nation. Monsieur de Goltz has had an opportunity of showing what he is, and his first attempt gives promise that he will one day become a very useful servant to your Majesty.

I beg to return my acknowledgments for all your Majesty's favours, and am, with the most profound respect,

Your Majesty's
Very humble, very obedient,
And very devoted servant,
R. Keith.

THE KING OF PRUSSIA TO MR. KEITH.

Head Quarters, Breslau, May 22nd, 1762.

Monsieur L'Envoye de Keith,

Your letter of the 9th of this month gave me real pleasure, and I am the more obliged to you for the congratulations you address to me on the conclusion of my peace with the Emperor of Russia, that I can

only attribute the success of this negotiation to the *zeal with which you exerted yourself to make it succeed.* It is a work *due to your efforts alone;* and I shall cherish for it a gratitude proportioned to the important service which, on this occasion, you have rendered me.

The reflections you make on the obligation your Court feels itself under to support Portugal appear to me very just; and I shall never be the man to condemn a power *which fulfils its engagements.* If the views of my Lord Bute, in making overtures to the Court of Vienna, have been to detach her from France, I can, in that case, find nothing to blame in them. You are, no doubt, aware that the British Ministry is at this moment taking steps for renewing the negotiation with the Court of Versailles. I doubt, however, if this affair will assume any shape, before the end of the present campaign; and I greatly apprehend that the French are merely seeking to *keep up the game.**

Wherefore I pray, &c.

FREDERICK.

The irony—(especially regarding powers which "fulfil their engagements," and the secret mânœuvres of the British Ministry) which runs through this epistle, will appear more *piquant* when we remember that the despatch so feelingly deprecated by Sir Andrew Mitchell, virtually breaking off the long-established relations between Great Britain and Prussia, bore nearly the same date as the above.

* In the original "*amuser le tapis*," anglicé "humbugging you."

MR. KEITH TO MR. GRENVILLE.*

St. Petersburgh, July 2-13, 1762.

Sir,

Last Friday morning, (the day that, by the Emperor's orders, I was to meet him at Peterhoff), about nine o'clock, one of my servants came running into my bed-chamber with a frighted countenance, and told me that there was a great uproar at the other end of the town; that the guards having mutinied, were assembled, and talked of no less than dethroning the Emperor. He could tell me no other circumstances, nor could give me any answer to the only question I asked, namely, if the Empress was in town; but about a quarter of an hour after, one of the gentlemen of our factory came in, and informed me that the Empress was in town; that she had been declared by the guards and the other troops of the garrison their Empress and Sovereign, and that she was there actually at the Kasansky Church to hear mass, and the *Te Deum* sung upon the occasion. He added the circumstance of Prince George of Holstein Gottorps being made prisoner as he was endeavouring to get out of town. This account was soon confirmed from all quarters, and we understood that all the colleges of the empire, and all the great people in town, were taking the oaths of fidelity to the Empress, as the guards and other military corps had already done.

This surprising revolution was brought about and completed in less than two hours, without one drop of blood being spilt, or any act of violence committed

* The original despatch containing the account of the deposition of the Emperor Peter III. and the usurpation of Catharine II., has been deemed a necessary conclusion to the previous correspondence.

and all the parts of the city at any distance from the palace, especially the street where I and the greatest part of his Majesty's subjects reside, was as quiet as if nothing extraordinary had happened: the only novelty to be seen was some piquets placed at the bridges and corners of the streets, and some of the horse-guards patrolling in order to preserve the public tranquillity.

As soon as the guards had assembled in the morning, several detachments were sent out on the Peterhoff road, to hinder any intelligence from being sent to the Emperor, and they performed that piece of duty with so much diligence and exactness, that not a single person got through, except Leon Alexandrowitch Narishkin, the Master of Horse, and Count Rosman Larivonitch Woronzow.

About eight o'clock that same evening, the Empress on horseback marched out of town, at the head of 10,000 or 12,000 men, with a great train of artillery, on the road to Peterhoff, in order to attack the Emperor, whether at Peterhoff or Oranienbaum; and the next day, in the afternoon, we received the accounts of his Imperial Majesty having, without striking a stroke, surrendered his person, and resigned his crown. The few authentic circumstances of this great event which I have been able to pick up, are, that this affair had been long contriving, but was hastened in the execution by one of the conspirators having been arrested the day before, upon some indignant words he had let drop; this alarmed the others, who, for fear of a total discovery, resolved to go to work immediately, and in consequence, sent some of their number in the night-time to Peterhoff to apprise the Empress, and to represent the necessity of her repairing to town without loss of time. It was, I think, one Orlow, formerly an officer in the artillery, who was charged with this

commission, and who having got admission about four in the morning into her Imperial Majesty's bed-chamber, informed her of her danger. Accordingly, as soon as she could get dressed, the Empress slipped out of the palace, some say by a back door, others by a window, without one single servant of either sex; and after several little accidents, such as horses tiring, &c., arrived in town about six o'clock, and went herself to the *Caserne* of the Ismaeloffskey guards, which she found under arms, with their colonel, the Hetman Rasomowsky, at their head, ready to receive her. As for the Emperor, he had not the least suspicion or information of the affair till between eleven and twelve in the forenoon, when, being upon the road from Oranienbaum to Peterhoff, he was met by a servant of Leon Narishkin, who acquainted him with the situation of affairs in town. His Majesty had proceeded to Peterhoff, and he learned there the manner which the Empress had left that place, her departure having been concealed by the bed-chamber women from the ladies and other courtiers, by the pretence of indisposition.

From that moment there was nothing but confusion and despair amongst the Emperor's small court, and no resolution of any kind was taken till very late in the evening, when his Imperial Majesty, with all his train, ladies and gentlemen, went on board of a galley that rode before Peterhoff, and rowed over to Cronstadt in the hopes of being received there; but Telegin, a Commissioner of the Admiralty, and Mardison, a Vice-Admiral, who were sent down in the morning from Petersburgh, had got the start of him, and when the Emperor approached the harbour, he was not only refused admittance, but threatened to be fired upon. The confusion and despair, as you may easily imagine, were now greatly increased, and the galley, with the

other boats that attended, returned, taking different routes, some to Peterhoff, and the Emperor to Oranienbaum, with a very small attendance.

On the morning of Saturday, on hearing that the Empress was drawing near with so great a force, the Emperor sent Prince Galitzin and General Ismaeloff to her Majesty with proposals, and after some time Ismaeloff returned with a paper, ready drawn up, containing a resignation of the crown, which the Emperor signed, and then got into a coach along with that officer, and took the road to Peterhoff; but whither he was carried, or where he is now, I am absolutely ignorant.

It is reported that in the above-mentioned paper there was a clause, declaring that the Emperor should have liberty to retire to Holstein, if he thought proper.

Thus ended this extraordinary and important transaction, and her Imperial Majesty, after passing the night at a country house of Prince Kurakin's, returned to town on Sunday morning; and having heard, in passing, mass at the Admiralty church, went straight to the summer palace, where she and her son, the Grand Duke, have taken up their residence, and where people of all degrees were admitted to kiss her hands. With regard to the motives of this sudden revolution, it is plain that the resumption of the Church lands, and the neglect of the clergy, were the principal; and the next to these, the severe discipline which the Emperor endeavoured to introduce among the troops, particularly the guards, who had been accustomed to great idleness and leisure; and the discontent was heightened by the resolution his Imperial Majesty had taken of carrying a great part of that corps into Germany with him, in order to make war upon Denmark, a measure disagreeable to the whole nation, who lamented greatly their

being drawn into new expenses and new dangers, for the *Duchy of Holstein*, (which they considered as a trifling object, and entirely indifferent to Russia,) just after the Emperor had sacrificed the conquests made by the Russian army, and which were of importance to Russia, to his friendship for the King of Prussia. Several other small circumstances, greatly exaggerated and artfully represented and improved, contributed greatly to the fall of this unhappy Prince, who had many excellent qualities, and never did a violent or cruel action in the course of his short reign; but who, from aversion to business, and the unhappy choice of favourites, who encouraged him in it, let everything fall into confusion, and from a false notion he had adopted of having fixed the affections of the nation, by favours conferred in the beginning of his reign, fell into an indolence and security which proved fatal to him. I cannot help adding that not only myself, but several persons of sense and discernment, thought that we could perceive a considerable difference in the Prince from what he was for some months after he mounted the throne; and that the perpetual hurry in which he lived, and the flattery of the vile people about him, had in some degree affected his understanding. To conclude, I must acknowledge that I did not apprehend this revolution would have happened so soon, but I always thought that if he left his dominions it would prove fatal to him; and for that reason, I used every possible means to divert him from his intended journey, as well by insinuations to himself, as by representing the danger of that measure to those who had a title to offer him their advice.

Last night, about ten o'clock, I received a message, desiring me to be at Court this morning at eleven: and having gone accordingly, I found all the foreign minis-

ters there, and we were soon after introduced to her Majesty's presence, and had the honour to kiss her hand, in doing which I took occasion to make her the proper compliment in his Majesty's name, which was kindly received, and returned in very handsome terms; and upon the whole, my reception was very good. Those who made the greatest figure were the Hetman, and the Orlow who has been before mentioned, who wore the ribbon of St. Alexander and the key of chamberlain.

Separate, and sent by the same messenger:—

"*St. Petersburg, July 3rd*, 1762.

"You may easily imagine the concern this sudden revolution has given me, more particularly as I am not without apprehension (besides the gratitude I owed to the unfortunate Emperor for all the marks of his grace and condescension), that it may very much affect the general system of affairs, and those of the King of Prussia in particular; but of this I can only guess at present. However, I shall make it my endeavour to get the best lights I can of the disposition of this Court, to transmit them to you.

"What I am going to add is principally with regard to myself. You, Sir, and the rest of his Majesty's servants, will have plainly seen, in what passed with relation to Mr. W——, that I am not so happy as to be in the Empress's favour, and I have particular reasons to be convinced of that truth; this obliges me, as a faithful servant to the King, to declare to you that I think his Majesty's affairs would suffer by passing through my hands; and therefore it is my earnest desire to have my recall sent to me as soon as possible, and another

minister sent in my place; for I should think myself very unhappy if any part of the King's business should miscarry from any defect in my person, either real, or in the opinion of the new sovereign of this country."

"*July 5th.*

"I am more and more confirmed in my opinion that his Majesty's service requires another minister at this court than myself; and therefore I must renew * my request of having my recall; and it will be a particular grace if the King will allow me to set out from hence immediately after I shall have received it, that I may make my journey home before the bad season comes on."

It would appear from the above, as well as from a previous correspondence, that the favour, always employed for the most legitimate ends, and the deference shown, in his earlier measures (well would it have been for the young Emperor, had it been universal!) to the councils of Mr. Keith, had naturally, perhaps, created some jealousy in the mind of his ambitious partner, the future Catherine the Second. And though (as documents still existing prove) an unworthy intrigue, on the part of a junior scion of the diplomatic body, to fasten on Mr. Keith the imputation of conduct towards her, while yet Grand Duchess, equally foreign to his head and heart, signally and triumphantly failed—yet, on her accession, advantage seems to have been taken of it, and of Mr. Keith's resignation, to revive a punctilio, dispensed with when Peter the Third mounted the throne at his *express request*, requiring that an ambassador-extraordinary, in the person of a nobleman

* The disinterestedness of this suggestion must do honour to the writer's character. It was the third time the request had been made during his mission.

of high rank, should proceed to Petersburgh, as the bearer of his sovereign's congratulations on the event.

To this arrangement Mr. Keith, whose indignant repudiation of the charge of disrespect towards Catherine while still an injured wife and oppressed princess, form a striking episode in a life of which mildness and urbanity were the distinguishing characteristics *—very willingly assented. Nor is it to be supposed that one, to whom the brief career of her unfortunate husband had been an object of pitying and almost parental interest, could have derived much satisfaction from an elevation to power founded not merely on the deposition, but the subsequent murder of a young prince, whose original tendencies were amiable, and the dawnings of whose reign gave promise of great qualities, unhappily stifled and obscured by the excesses of intemperance and influence of improper associates. The very clinging of the unhappy young man, even while surrounded by these, and in spite of the envoy's faithful remonstrances, to the mentor whose counsels he disregarded (for he had made a point of Mr. Keith's spending, at Oranienbaum, the very week during which his arrest took place), showed that respect for virtue and gratitude for kindness had still a hold on his mind. To the existence of corresponding feelings in the British minister's breast, we have the testimony of Princess Dashkoff, little likely, from her share in the rebellion

* It led, though, during the period of his highest influence and consideration at the Court of Petersburgh, to his instant resignation of the Embassy, and when prevailed on by earnest representations from home to retain it, he thus notices in a postscript the unworthy cause of suspicion : "The disagreements between Mr. ——— and myself proceeded entirely from his insolent behaviour ; and our reconciliation was owing to the most absolute, I might say, the lowest submission on his part, as his letter to me" [still extant] "will justify."

which placed Catherine on the throne, to be partial to any one who had treated her with indignity. "The only foreign minister," writes she, in her Memoirs, "at all in the Emperor's favour, except the Prussian, was the English ambassador, Mr. Keith. Prince Dashkoff and I lived in the greatest intimacy with this most respectable old gentleman, who treated me with as much tenderness as if I had been his daughter (as he often used to call me). At one of our little parties at his house, when there was no one present but Prince Galitzin, I remember his saying, in speaking of the Emperor (*with many expressions of regret*), that as he had begun his reign with a determination of gaining his people's love, he would certainly end it by gaining nothing but their contempt."

Whatever might be the ministerial objects which led to the substitution above alluded to, of a nobleman of high rank and ample fortune, in the room of an humbler, though faithful and long-tried servant of the crown, nothing could be more courteous and flattering than the expressions on the occasion, of the then Secretary of State to Mr. Keith.

Lord Barrington thus conveys, through the channel of the new ambassador, his sentiments towards his predecessor :—

Cavendish Square, August 12th, 1762.

Dear Sir,

I have taken the liberty to trouble Lord Buckingham with this letter, containing real assurances of the most affectionate esteem and regard for you. The conduct you have invariably held through life, entitles you to claim them from every man who has good sentiments in his own mind, or values them in the minds of others.

I must, at the same time, express my satisfaction at your return home. When Russia takes one valuable friend from me, she restores me another. I hope you will remain here long after Lord Buckingham shall return, and enjoy at home the rewards your long and faithful labours abroad deserve. I ought to have added the ability with which you have served your king and country: but that is too well known to suffer loss from any omission of mine. I beg you will believe me to be, at all times, and on all occasions, with the most perfect esteem,

Dear Sir,
Your most faithful and obedient servant,
BARRINGTON.

Among the most distinguished of the friends for life, whom his, in other respects, uncongenial exile enabled Mr. Keith to secure, were the princes of the Polish House of Czartoriski, whose patriotism has always assigned to them the loftiest place in the annals of their oppressed and unhappy country, while their amiable qualities in private life rendered them equally objects of esteem and regard to the persons of all nations who shared their splendid hospitality.

"The two brothers Czartoriski," writes Lord Malmesbury, in 1767, "have public dinners and suppers every day for as many as please to come; and these two houses are the great resort of strangers. Each house may be looked upon as a town, as there are in it all sorts of artificers, and a great *seigneur* need never send out of his own walls for anything. Prince Czartoriski's personal attendants and servants amount to 375. The number in his country-house is infinitely greater, besides his troops, which consist of 3000 or 4000 men.

"Prince Czartoriski, Great Chancellor of Lithuania,

and eldest uncle to the King, was destined by the Empress to be *crushed;* and she had, by her ambassador, signified to him that if he did not lay down his charge, and return *à ses terres,* he should be tried, condemned, and *executed.* His answer was, 'Je n'ai pas reçu mon emploi de sa Majesté Impériale, ainsi elle me pardonnera si je ne veux en rien, m'en défaire à sa requête.' His fate was determined and foreseen, for the next meeting of the Diet; and in the interim that venerable man," continues Lord Malmesbury, who dined with him frequently, "did the honours of his long table with the utmost calmness to strangers, inquiring of them, with the greatest ease and good humour, about the manners of their respective countries. This, which at any time would have been striking in a man near fourscore, was peculiarly so in one at the time under sentence of death. The King's greater humanity saved him; for the Czarina had opposed him strongly; yet Poniatowski, to his credit be it spoken,* exerted himself so warmly, and made such a point of getting his pardon, that the Empress granted it."

It was at an earlier period, while Peter the Third still held his short-lived sway, and while the influence over him for good, possessed by Mr. Keith, found appropriate exercise in the assignment of honours, where honour was so justly due, that the following letters were written; and it is pleasing to be assured that the expressions of esteem and affection with which they teem were not mere words of course, or the overflowings of momentary gratitude for benefits received, but borne out by persevering attachment on the part of the writers, not only towards him to whom they were addressed, but his son,

* This alludes to his personal unpopularity with Poniatowski, of which proofs will appear in the correspondence.

Sir Robert Murray Keith. The tenor of the first, from Prince Augustus, the then head of that illustrious family, bears testimony to the influence of Mr. Keith at the Court of Petersburgh.

PRINCE CZARTORISKI TO MR. KEITH.*

Pulawy, June 2nd, 1762.

SIR,

I am at a loss to find terms to express to you all the extent of my gratitude; but I flatter myself you cannot doubt of my extreme sensibility to the friendship and the goodness with which you have interested yourself on the subject of the *Cordon Bleu* of Russia, in favour of my son. It was delivered to him yesterday by the Russian Envoy.

An universal suffrage has long assured to you the public esteem. You have given me reason to owe to you, in addition, and for life, the truest attachment and gratitude.

Permit me to inclose a letter for his Imperial Majesty, entreating you to present it at a proper opportunity. It contains my thanks to this great Prince, who, by the first steps of his reign, has rendered himself an object of devoted admiration.† I should enter into details, did I not know you to be sufficiently informed on the state of our Court. The ills of our country are too well known; time alone can bring them any remedy. As for our private interests, certain persons continue to make it their business to render myself and my family odious to the King. Favours commonly granted to others

* Translated from the original in French.

† It must be recollected that this was written during that early period of the young Emperor's reign which gave rise to similar sentiments throughout Europe.

to us are uniformly refused. I desire permission to resign to my children the starosties which I possess, and to my son the regiment of guards which I command. All my solicitations to the above effect have hitherto proved in vain. Our crime is that of being good patriots,* in the eyes of persons to whom the welfare of their country is matter of indifference. My sole confidence now is in your support. Endeavour, I beseech you, to obtain from his Imperial Majesty a positive order to his minister at Warsaw, to enforce at our Court what I am soliciting. All the difficulties would then, I have no doubt, be instantly removed. I remain, with the highest consideration,

Your Excellency's, most humbly,

AUGUSTUS CZARTORISKI.

That the son was not behind the parent in warmth of feeling and expression, this playful polyglot epistle proves, as well as that English was then successfully cultivated in Poland. The amiable and well-known Prince Adam thus writes:—

A Varsovie, 12*me Mai*, 1762.

MONSIEUR,

Par le plaisir que vous trouvez à obliger vos amis, vous devez imaginer celui que l'on ressent à devoir

* The patriotism of the family of Czartorinski, synonymous through life with its illustrious name, cannot, perhaps, be more fully estimated than by stating a fact which came under the Editor's personal knowledge. After the last and bloodiest of the revolutions in that unhappy country, (their part in which was merely the moderate and inevitable one forced on them by their proud position) the inheritors of all the splendours formerly described, and actual possessors, at the commencement of the insurrection, of the vast revenues of the family—were negotiating for the lease of a humble cottage in Wales, their total expenditure in which was to be necessarily limited to £250 per annum.

à ceux qu'on aime. J'ai reçu la lettre dont vous m'avez honoré; and *I wish I could persuade you of my gratitude, as much as I am convinced myself of the warmth of your friendship. I am only sorry that, by all probability, I am destined to be an useless, though very warm, friend to you.* Je n'aurais pas fini de long temps, si je voulais vous dire la reconnaissance dont mon cœur est rempli pour vous. Votre amitié m'a suivi partout; et je me croirais bien heureux, si quelque occasion me présentait le moyen de vous prouver, que personne ne vous aime et vous honore plus sincèrement que celui qui a l'honneur d'être, Monsieur,

De votre Excellence, le très humble, et
très obéissant serviteur,
Le Prince Adam Czartoriski.

Je voudrais pouvoir trouver pour vous de ces expressions dont parle Milton—

"Where more is meant than meets the ear."

Nor was it alone while enjoying, in the possession of official situation, the power of conferring obligations, that these tributes of affection smoothed for Mr. Keith the often painful path of duty. Long after his retirement from the service of his country, similar testimonies of unimpaired regard, from the great and good, came to cheer for him the evening of life. From these may be selected, for its octogenarian rarity, as well as intrinsic interest, one from the venerable Marshal Münnich,* whose counsels guided, under three successive reigns, the helm of affairs in his native country, and who, at 82, was not only still competent to an active

* The career of Count Münnich is one of the romances of real history. Generalissimo, under the Empress Anne, of the Russian army, which he entirely and beneficially new modelled, he fought, along with the celebrated Marshal Keith, then in the service of Russia, several memorable

charge of public affairs, but to the task, enjoined on him by his talented royal mistress, Catherine, of writing for posterity the memoirs of his time.

The letter will derive interest from a scene, as described by Mr. Keith, to which even Russia, with its frequent mutations of favour and exile, could afford few parallels.

"The Duke of Courland, Biron, with his Duchess, arrived here on Tuesday night from their exile. He appeared in the drawing-room, with the blue ribbon of Russia, with which the Emperor had invested him, and his Imperial Majesty showed great distinction to the whole family. I went yesterday in the afternoon, to pay my respects to that Prince, and to Field Marshal Münnich, who arrived the night before, in perfect good health, and with all his faculties entire, though after an exile, or rather, prison of above *twenty years,* during which he was allowed to converse with no mortal but his own lady, and the few servants he had—and very rarely with the soldiers of his guard.

"Marshal Münnich was presented to the Emperor last Sunday, and in the evening the *Duke of Courland* and he appeared *together* in the circle, with their blue ribbons; and were both treated by his Majesty with great marks of distinction. It was really an affecting scene, to see those two illustrious persons, after having

campaigns against the Turks. Prime Minister under the Grand Duchess Anne, he had attained to such unlimited power and glory, that his ungrateful benefactress is said to have hinted, that being at the summit of both, he could never choose a better time *to die.* On the accession of Elizabeth he was sent to inhabit the dwelling in Siberia, of which his own pencil had given a sketch for his predecessor, the favourite Biron, Duke of Courland. Recalled by Peter the Third, he again attained the summit of power, and was (as will be seen) in equal favour with his successor Catherine; though, on account of his great age, not replaced at the helm of affairs.

survived so long a course of misfortunes, appear again, at their age, at a Court where they had formerly made so great a figure; and to see them, that being their first interview, converse together with great civility, and without any appearance of that jealousy and animosity which had drawn all their unhappiness upon them. The Duke of Courland's two sons are both made Major-Generals, and Count Münnich is declared *first* Field-Marshal; Prince George of Holstein having, in a very handsome manner, quitted the *Pas* to him. The Emperor, to compliment him, gave, for the parole that evening—'*Vive le premier Felt Maréchal de Russie!*' The Duke of Courland is in the seventy-second year of his age, and Count Münnich in the seventy-ninth of his."

FIELD-MARSHAL MÜNNICH TO MR. KEITH.

SIR, *Petersburgh, August 16th*, 1764.

It is long since I received a letter which did me more honour or gave me more pleasure, than that with which you were pleased to favour me on the 18th of June last. I learned from it with satisfaction the re-establishment of your precious health, and the pleasing circumstances which attend you in your honourable retreat. I congratulate you upon them from the bottom of my heart, and add my best wishes for their satisfactory continuance; in which I shall always take the interest of a sincere friend.

The King could not more suitably exercise his liberality, than in granting you a pension of 1000*l.* per annum, in requital of your zeal and services. But you will allow me to say, that methinks his Majesty would have done better still, by retaining you in the ministry, and making use of your knowledge, abilities, and merits,

than by consenting to your retirement. Great Britain must needs *abound* with able ministers, to be enabled to dispense with persons so enlightened, and so fully experienced in negotiations. I do not, however, esteem you the less happy. It must always be a happiness to enjoy, in *one's own country*, unbroken repose in the bosom of one's family, the rather that you have the satisfaction of witnessing the brilliant figure made by your sons; one of them, the Colonel,* making a tour in France, and experiencing there a distinguished reception; the younger, a Post-Captain,† returned to visit his parents, whom he knew but by reputation. May it please God to multiply, through this worthy offspring, your illustrious descendants, to the remotest posterity! At the age of eighty-two, I am, thank God, perfectly well! having just been making a tour, in the suite of her Majesty, to the ports of the Baltic confided to my care. I am writing, by order of my most gracious Sovereign, certain memoirs; but I do not get on very rapidly, from the infinity of business connected with the works under my charge: besides, being a man of war, I can boast but little of the qualifications for an author capable of satisfying the curious reader. I drink to your health very often, with my son, now President of the Board of Trade, who begs to assure you of his respects. Madame la Maréchale (as well as all belonging to me) is to you most respectfully devoted; and as for myself, I shall cease only with the latest of my days, to be, with the most indissoluble attachment,

Your very humble and very obedient servant, &c.,

Le Comte de Münnich.

* Afterwards Sir Robert Murray Keith, K.B., Envoy Extraordinary at Vienna.

† Afterwards Admiral Sir Basil Keith, Governor of Jamaica.

To be thus remembered, and by such a man, even after a two years' separation, was abundantly flattering; but, as in the instance now to be quoted, to have his memory cherished in Vienna, and that by one of its brightest ornaments, after fifteen years of absence, must have been still more so; and the sentiments are so gratifyingly expressed, both as regards Mr. Keith and his son and successor, by the amiable Princess Lichtenstein, that out of innumerable similar tributes to worth, of which all record might perish but for this timely publication, it has been selected as the concluding one.

PRINCESS LICHTENSTEIN TO MR. KEITH.*

Vienna, October 27th, 1773.

Permit me, Sir, to renew an old acquaintance, of which I have never lost sight; and of which, in spite of absence, my family and myself will always retain the recollection. I have even the presumption to believe that you do so likewise; and that you have not forgotten a city, and still less friends, who are so truly attached to you. All I can assure you of, without the slightest flattery, is, that your memory is there cherished and respected. I call to witness your son, who has every possible claim to be deemed worthy of belonging to such a father. He follows admirably in your footsteps, and makes himself equally esteemed and beloved. I have the extreme satisfaction of conversing with him sometimes about you; imagine what good we both say of you! He has had the kindness fully to detail to me the mode of life you lead; which appears to me highly

* Translated from the original in French.

suited to your character.* Were it not for interrupting the tranquillity of this peaceful existence, and risking your health, I should be tempted to wish you might execute the projected idea of returning once more to visit us. But for the above double reason, I dare not desire it. One must love one's friends for their *own sake,* and not for *selfish considerations.*

You have lately lost here a truly respectable one, who held you dear until death. I speak of my worthy uncle, Prince Wenzel. From your reciprocal friendship, methinks you will value, and receive with pleasure, a medal which has been recently struck, by order of a sovereign who knows how to render justice to distinguished merits, which, among other instances, she has proved by the inscription—a very touching one. My whole family—my husband especially—charge me with a thousand tender compliments. Accept from myself the assurances of esteem, of friendship, and the most distinguished sentiments of

La Princesse de Lichtenstein.

It was, indeed, a course of life as enviable as its evening could possibly afford, to which the Princess so gracefully and feelingly alludes; and which, at the close of a long and laborious course in the public service, Mr. Keith was privileged to enjoy. "Love, honour, troops of friends," were literally, not figuratively, his; and

* Mr. Keith resided for the first ten years after his return to Scotland in a villa near Edinburgh, called "the Hermitage," where he indulged—(in imitation of his amiable and patriotic brother-in-law, Sir Alexander Dick)—in the pleasures of gardening. The finest, if not first, melons raised in his native country, are said to have been sent home by him from the southern provinces of Russia. That the finer fruits were even at that period successfully cultivated in Scotland, appears from a letter of Sir A. Dick, who writes in September, 1762, "We have, this year, a *more than common profusion* of perfectly ripe apricots, peaches, plums, and *figs.*"

that in a dignified retreat in his beloved native country; in the bosom of a most affectionate and dutiful family, cheered by the society of the most distinguished men in Scotland,* while occasional visits to England (all of them connected with honourable events in the history of his sons) brought with them pleasing proofs that neither by his sovereign, nor by the friends whom, in public and private life, he had made for himself, were his merits forgotten, or his worth unappreciated.† It was on one of these occasions that Marshal Conway, writing to his friend Sir Robert Murray Keith, thus expressed himself:—"I had the pleasure of seeing your father before my departure; and can give you that of saying he seems to me to grow younger. I know I flatter such a son as you, in telling that news of *such a father*."

As a proof, ten years later, and within a few weeks of the close of Mr. Keith's life, of the continued good will of the sovereign he had faithfully served, as well as of his immediate principal in office, a letter from Lord Barrington, for its un-ministerial warmth, may claim insertion.

* A circle, then including its two eminent historians, Robertson and Hume, with whom Mr. Keith and his family lived in equal intimacy.

† Highly flattering autograph letters from the great Earl of Chatham, stating, on various occasions, the joint merits of father and sons, as grounds for the promotion of the latter, will find place elsewhere. It may not be inappropriate here to insert a note, written, on one of the visits above alluded to, by Mr. Pitt:—

"Mr. Pitt presents his compliments to Mr. Keith, and is extremely sensible of the obliging mark of his remembrance and friendship which the honour of his note conveys to him. He begs Mr. Keith and his sons will be assured that Mr. Pitt will always be happy and proud to have had any share in doing justice to *distinguished merit*, and that he esteems himself much honoured by so flattering a mention of his good wishes. Mr. Keith will be so good as to accept many sincere ones for his health and happiness.

"*Hayes, Sunday, June 9th*, 1765."

"Be assured, my dear and ever-valued friend, that neither you nor Mr. James Lindsay have been either forgotten or neglected; though till this day I have not been able to send you that good news for which we were both impatient. Your nephew is ensign in the 14th regiment, returning to England from North America; and commanded by Lieut.-General Keppel, and under him by Col. Dalrymple, brother to the Earl of Stair. I do not think he could have been placed more advantageously; and that must be some consolation to his friends for the delay. The king had *great pleasure* in giving a commission to a relation of your's; and if his Majesty had personally known you as long and intimately as his Secretary-at-War, he could not have spoken more justly or more kindly on your subject.

"I flatter myself that you enjoy your usual good health; which, added to an excellent mind and temper, the recollection of a life well spent, the full possession *universal esteem and respect*, and the satisfaction of having worthy and accomplished children, honourably established, must give you all the happiness of which human nature, towards the evening of life, is capable. That you may long enjoy these blessings is the earnest wish of,

"Dear Sir, your most faithful
"And most obedient servant,
"BARRINGTON."

Will it be thought indiscreet—in commemorating one whose public career has made him, in life and death, in some sort public property—to lift aside for a moment the veil of obscurity from that domestic circle, which, cheered by his vigorous mind and sunny disposition, to the utmost verge of human existence, was, alas! ere long to be bereaved by his unlooked-for

removal? Four variously gifted, but all of them uncommon women (in an age especially when female cultivation was far from having attained its present standard), surrounded the "old hermit" at his fireside; transferred (happily as it would seem for the purposes of prompt and unceasing medical aid) not long before, from the villa named the *Hermitage*, to the house in the New Town of Edinburgh, whose erection had been long an object of pride and interest to his absent son.

A venerable aunt, step-sister only to the owner, but early thrown upon his kindness, and endeared by the very half century at least, of filial tenderness, lavished on the still lively *nonagenarian*—stood foremost on the list; and judging by the playful remembrances of her absent nephews, must have formed a delightful, as well as amiable* addition to the circle. The special care of this relic of former generations, as well as every other work of charity and benevolence, devolved on Mr. Keith's eldest daughter, whose name in the family, and far beyond it, of "St. Agnes," not only appropriately designated her character as it respected others, but, alas! by anticipation, the saintly resignation with which she long supported, and then sunk under, the most painful of human maladies. Of this noble specimen of womanhood, whom it was never the privilege of the writer to behold, the following reminiscences, kindly volunteered by one well qualified to judge, may give a faint idea.

"Her countenance," says this surviving witness, "was open and animated; expressive, in a high degree,

* Sir Robert, it will be shortly seen, speaks of her as one "who has felt much grief, but never raised a painful sigh in the breast of a fellow-mortal."

of candour and benevolence. It was impossible to hear her conversation without at once perceiving a cultivated mind and great energy of thought. She had a flow of elegant language, which left no impression of provincial dialect, but such as would have commanded attention in any society or any age. It was impossible to leave her presence without the most enthusiastic emotions of gratitude; and her conversation was peculiarly adapted to kindle in a youthful mind the warmest sentiments of benevolence and virtue. Her dress was plain, and in the fashion of former times. Her manner was courteous and dignified; so that you at once imagined her to belong to some superior order of beings, far above the trammels of fashion, or the ordinary routine of local society. The writer of this, at the close of more than half a century, looks back with unabated feelings on the impressions he received in his interview with this excellent person." If such was the effect produced, and on a stranger, by *one interview*, how charming must have been the influence in domestic life of the being thus feelingly described?

Nor was the "sister Jannie" of the following letters less amply endowed by Nature with the talent for which the family had showed itself remarkable; though cast in a somewhat sterner mould, and early withdrawn from the world at large, and ultimately even from the social circle, by an accident,* which, though prevented from proving fatal by the courageous energy of a gallant soldier, embittered, nevertheless, the remaining

* The clothes of this excellent woman having caught fire, it was the happiness of a comrade of her brother's in Germany (the Roby Hepburn, often fondly mentioned by him, afterwards colonel of the Enniskillen Dragoons) by wrapping her in the hearth-rug, to prolong her valuable life; though by the severe injury to her limbs, she was deprived of their use, and of the enjoyments of society.

existence of the talented recluse. It was, however, no unprofitable seclusion to herself or others. From her chamber of suffering emanated many acts of beneficence; and its inmate has left a noble and undying monument in the bequest of the greater portion of her means to an endowment for *Incurables*, less fortunately circumstanced than herself.

Of the "sister Anne," the youngest of the family, the object of fond predilection to her father and brother, more will be said hereafter; and in the words of one more competent to do justice to her rare character.* What has been quoted already from the same pen, may for the present serve to prove, that she united, in a singular degree, the characteristics of a gifted family—her father's lofty dignity of mind, the benevolent urbanity of one sister, and the talent and quickness of another; with the wit and playfulness which tempered in her (as in himself) the unbending rectitude and high feeling of her brother. The following letter will be the best record of the feelings which gave it birth.

MISS ANNE KEITH TO SIR R. M. KEITH.†

Edinburgh, September 21st, 1774.

My dearest Brother,

I can find no form of words that will, in any degree, soften or prepare you for the dismal tidings I must impart. Our father! our excellent, our amiable father! is no more. He died this morning at two

* With the letter before alluded to, from Sir Walter Scott (written on her lamented death, and which it would be anticipating by nearly half a century to introduce here) it is proposed to wind up this fond record of a family, of whom it may perhaps without vanity be said, "that all the sons were brave, and all the daughters virtuous."

† This letter, and a few succeeding ones which (to bring to a termination the career of the venerable statesman to whom the preceding pages have

o'clock. Such were the circumstances of his distemper, that it became our ardent prayer that he should not survive. His illness lasted but eleven days. On Saturday se'nnight we were called to him, at two in the morning. He was in a most dreadful asthma, which W— thought would have cut him off before the physicians could reach the house. He did everything for him in a moment, and in a few hours heat had begun to return. He was perfectly in his senses, but could hardly articulate a word; he attempted the word "dying," and seemed perfectly resigned, though in violent pain. When at last we could make out an expression, he bade *God bless us!* By little and little I could make out his meanings, and found he thought his illness paralytic, which indeed it was. Every remedy that friendship or skill could suggest was applied, and succeeded wonderfully. By next morning, he spoke amazingly well, and was in good spirits. He said that his head was clear, and he was willing to compound for the loss of a limb; the left leg was entirely numbed. I never saw him more distinct, or more *cheerful*, than he was all the week. He bade us write to you on Monday. I said I expected he was to be so much better by Friday, that I would delay it till then. "That will do," said he;* "remember to tell him that I suspect Ernest Harrach thinks him colder than usual; not that he says anything, but I think it is implied in his last," (I will transcribe the paragraph afterwards). When Friday

been dedicated) are here given, in anticipation of their date in the general narrative, was written when Sir R. M. Keith had replaced its subject at Vienna.

* There is something touchingly characteristic in the desire (at such a moment) of the veteran "*peace-maker*," to save an old Vienna friend from a possible (though unfounded) feeling of neglect, on the part of one incapable of deserving the imputation.

came, he was so well and cheerful, that I was very willing to write to you, but he bade me let it alone till Monday, and he would make out his first scheme of writing a page in my letter. What a Monday it was!

The gleam of sunshine lasted till Saturday night. That evening he had a conversation with Nancy, enumerating all the good things of his life—his worthy parents—his genteel education—his angel of a wife—his comfort in his children—their honourable and easy situation—his own consciousness of good-will to all men—and the return of good-will he had met with; all these he dwelt upon with pleasure. "When I take all together," said he, "I am very tranquil with my poor leg lying like a log beside me." He continued in this blessed disposition till midnight, when I left him in a sweet soft slumber. The nurse and John tell us that he had two of these sweet sleeps before two o'clock on Sunday morning, when he awoke at once—raving! He could not make any articulate sound; but we saw the complaint was in his head, by his constantly putting up his hand. I imagined that in the first moment of the attack he had known that his head was struck: a thing he dreaded ten times worse than the worst of deaths. The people of skill, however, assure us that if he did know it at all, it could have been only for a moment. All that occurred between this and his death was a mixture of torpor and restlessness; a state from which I saw him relieved with much satisfaction. I do not know that I can ever have so severe a trial as the dread of his recovery, which hung over me for part of Monday, and I dwell on it that it may have the same effect with you as it has had with us all; it has convinced us that we might have suffered more upon his account than death makes us feel. Even poor aunt Barbara was glad to resign him.

I look upon Sunday morning as the time his mind died, and again, I thank God that the poor shattered body followed. His sick nurse, his servants, everybody and everything pleased him while he was himself; and he died calm, and without one struggle. When I kissed his cold lips I said to myself, "Sweet are the slumbers of the just!" He recovered the very same placid countenance I had left him with on Saturday night.

My uncle is with us, and ordering everything with becoming decency. When I look round the house, the feeling is very bitter, to think how soon it has lost its master! at the same time, it has been a blessed house on this occasion, as we had every assistance for him in a moment. The recovery from the first attack was entirely owing to the prompt remedies applied; had we lost even minutes, we must have regretted it for ever. Our door has been crowded with friends, every hour of the day; no cold formal messages: people came themselves, and questioned the servants minutely. Had he been *first minister*, there could not have been more solicitude, and the *heart* was in all!

Farewell, my dear brother—my friend, my father now! Little did I think I was so soon to claim your protection in that light! God bless and comfort you, prays your

A. K.

SIR ROBERT MURRAY KEITH TO MISS AGNES KEITH.

My dear Nancy,

I must have the comfort of writing a few lines to each of my sisters: not to exhort them to suppress their grief for the greatest of all losses, but to beseech them to rely with confidence upon every sort of alleviation which the most genuine friendship and affection in a brother can procure them through the longest period

of life. Our family is strong indeed in those principles which parental virtue, and the fairest lessons of disinterested candour inspire and cherish. The little fortune we have, we have in common; and I am thankful that, in saying so, I shall be warranted by those feelings to which you have been witnesses since my infancy. There is not a child of that father and mother whom we have lost, who would not gladly share the last shilling with the others. You all know what I think, and what I wish; act for yourselves. You are sure of my approbation; but with one single compact—that we never separate—that our father's house hold us all for ever! You, my dear Nancy, will cheerfully dedicate your attention to the support and consolation of our father's sister: I could envy you the means of making her old age comfortable. She has felt much grief, who never raised a painful sigh in the breast of a fellow-creature! Embrace her in my name, and tell her I will never lose sight of that example her brother set before me. Adieu, my dear Nancy; let each of you tell me what you would have me to do, and I am sure I shall be happy in showing you how affectionately I am your friend and brother,

R. M. K.

MISS ANNE KEITH TO LORD SUFFOLK.*

My Lord,

Since the first moment of recollection after the shock of my father's death, which happened on Wednesday morning, I have had a desire to write to your Lordship on the subject. I am now convinced that it has been false delicacy which has withheld me hitherto.

* The then official principal, and deeply-attached personal friend of Sir R. M. Keith.

There lies before me a letter from my brother Sir Robert, dated the 3rd of September, with everything in it that could have pleased and entertained his father.* The whole is summed up with a complaint of my brother Sir Basil's silence; "but," says he, "my *good Lord Suffolk* tells me he is perfectly recovered." This further proof that your Lordship enters into all that concerns your friend's family removes every doubt. I ought never to have had any, when I recollect the way in which my father spoke of your Lordship's kindnesses: civilities, he said, was too cold a word. All these kindnesses I can assure your Lordship were repaid by the warmth of his gratitude, both on his son's account and for that share of your personal friendship he himself enjoyed.

On the 10th of the month, my father was struck with palsy in a most violent and dangerous degree. Every help was instantly procured, and he recovered almost miraculously. His intellects were quite untouched; and though he wished to be released from the struggle between an excellent constitution and the most painful helplessness, he patiently submitted to the thoughts of living, when there was an appearance of recovery; happy that his mind was quite clear. When he found one side quite gone, instead of repining, he made an enumeration to us of all the blessings and comforts of his life, and then thanked God his mind was easy and tranquil. In the catalogue of his good things, the uncommon good fortune of his sons was not forgotten. He dwelt with pleasure and exultation on the favour of their sovereign, and the attachment of their friends and patrons; and hoped it was not partiality made him believe they would continue worthy of such a master

* It gave an account of his visit from Marshal Conway, and their joint expedition into Hungary.

and such friends. This calm and cheerful resignation continued till Sunday morning, when a second more dreadful shock entirely destroyed that high and worthy mind, which had, for seventy-seven years, carried him with applause and heartfelt comfort, through all the vicissitudes of life. We thank God that he did not survive after the fatal blow. We see him lamented by all who knew him; we dwell on the idea of his being beyond the reach of pain or care; we have no regret left on his account; and we are endeavouring to conquer our feelings for ourselves in the loss of a most affectionate parent, and most amiable and instructive companion. We have done every thing in our power to soften the blow to his sons, and to reconcile them to their irreparable loss.

And now that I have indulged myself by writing to your Lordship, I remain satisfied that I have omitted nothing that appears to me due to the memory of my blessed father, or the friendship which subsists between my brother and me.

I am, my Lord, with sincere respect, yours, &c.

ANNE KEITH.

THE DUKE OF QUEENSBERRY* TO SIR ALEXANDER DICK, BART.

Ambresburg, October 5th, 1774.

SIR,

I most heartily lament the loss of my worthy friend Mr. Keith, who was the oldest acquaintance

* The predecessor of the last eccentric Duke, and a most amiable man. What is said here, of the life-long friendships then formed by young men travelling for improvement, leads to a regret that it is no longer the invariable practice for the heirs of good families to make, under suitable guidance, the once indispensable *Grand Tour*. If occasionally perverted by a few *mauvais sujets*, the five hundred young Englishmen who, during twenty years, *did credit* to the patronage of Sir R. M. Keith, at Vienna, and subsequent honour to themselves and their country, show the former to have been *exceptions*.

I had in the world, and one for whom I had the greatest esteem, and most affectionate regard. Our acquaintance began in our early days, when we were both young travellers abroad; and we lived in mutual uninterrupted friendship from that time to the hour of his death. The particulars attending that fatal hour, which you have acquainted me with, deeply affected me. But the reflection of his having died as he had lived, equally meritoriously, gave me a degree of melancholy satisfaction; and I hope it will be of some consolation to his family, whose welfare and prosperity I most heartily wish, not only in regard to my departed friend, but in respect to their own personal merit, which gave him great comfort while he lived, and will do honour to his memory. My wife most sincerely condoles with me upon this melancholy occasion, and joins her affectionate compliments with mine to the afflicted family.

I am with great regard, Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

QUEENSBERRY.

THE EARL OF SUFFOLK * TO MISS ANNE KEITH.

Hampton Court, October 10th, 1774.

MADAM,

If I had not been extremely indisposed with the gout when I received the honour of your letter, I certainly should not have failed immediately returning

* Of that sensibility and delicacy of feeling, so often referred to in Sir R. Keith's correspondence, as characterising the writer of the above, and which must have endeared him inexpressibly to his intimate friends, a touching relic accidentally met the Editor's eye, in the valuable autograph collection of Wm. Hunter Baillie, Esq., son to the late eminent physician of that name. A letter from the Earl to the celebrated Dr. Hunter, on the death of the Countess, whom all the skill and tenderness

my best thanks and acknowledgments for so flattering an instance of attention towards me. Permit me to employ the very first moments of my recovery, in assuring you of the sincere part I take in whatever concerns Sir Robert Keith's family. Few people seemed to enjoy more serenity and happiness at the close of life than your father; and none deserved it more. He lived to see his sons greatly provided for; to see the representative of his family rise by his own merit to very distinguished honours and situation; to see him high in the esteem and confidence of his royal master, and dear to all his friends and acquaintance; respected abroad and at home. Everything seemed to conspire to smooth the evening of Mr. Keith's life, and Providence would not let him linger in disease, or protract a miserable existence.

I presume, Madam, to offer my best compliments to your sisters, and am, with great respect,

Your most obedient and most obliged
Humble servant,
SUFFOLK.

SIR R. MURRAY KEITH TO SIR ALEXANDER DICK.*

Vienna, Jan. 19th, 1775.

The gratitude which I have owed to you, my dear uncle, from my earliest infancy, for numberless proofs of kindness and affection, is now redoubled by the parental care and tenderness which you have shown to

of that great physician had failed to save, is perhaps unrivalled in conveying, at an agonizing moment, the mingled sentiments of christian resignation, conjugal grief, and a gratitude, of which even the loss of a beloved object had only rendered the expressions more delicately fervent.

* Of this most amiable and patriotic man, a diplomatic friend of Sir

my sisters in the distressful situation which has been the natural consequence of our late irreparable loss. They and I have inherited from your beloved sister, and from your deceased friend, our worthy father, such sentiments and feelings as will, I flatter myself, do no dishonour to their memories; nor leave any room to doubt that those excellent lessons which have been taught us by such parents, have made that deep impression which they so ardently wished in the minds of their children, and marked out to each of them an invariable line of principle and conduct. We are rich in what we think the treasures of this world, the good opinion of the public, and the warmest affections of private friendship. Of these riches we are both greedy and tenacious; and to our wants and wishes for every other species of wealth* your angel of a sister did happily set the narrowest bounds, with the first and strongest impressions of reason and example. My sisters have refused the small addition I was desirous to make to that income which they hold from the

R. M. Keith, who visited Scotland, says, "I was made particularly happy by the acquaintance of your amiable and accomplished sister; and was equally gratified and astonished with the *viridis et jucunda senectus* of the venerable Sir Alexander Dick. I have been so struck by the peculiar excellence which so strongly marks the whole race with which you are connected, that I cannot help exclaiming, '*Rara avis in terris.*'"

* Volumes, perhaps, could not more graphically convey the sentiment, as reflected from the mind of Mr. Keith to those of his family, than a little anecdote, for which the Editor is indebted to the venerable lady whose name has shed its friendly sanction over these pages:—One of Mr. Keith's daughters, while recounting to him an instance of unbecoming parsimony in a great personage, added a regret that those most richly endowed with the gifts of fortune were not always possessed of the generous and liberal heart which ought to accompany them. "Child!" exclaimed Mr. Keith, (or rather "Lassie," for the veteran diplomatist, when excited, was apt to relapse into the dialect of his youth,) "would ye give them *that too?*"

bounty of our beneficent sovereign. They did so from motives which I cannot help approving; but they have not taught me—nor did they wish to have me suppose —that my purse (whatever it may contain) was less their's because at this moment they saw no necessity for putting their hands in it. Our father's children will always be in the right in matters of money, because we know what is its true value, and think it well bestowed whenever it can purchase one pleasing recollection, or a grain of self-esteem.

My most ardent wish at present, is to see my sisters in possession of that sacred sum which my father so properly bequeathed to them. I hate the word "Independence," and they shall never use it with my consent; but I shall think myself infinitely obliged to any friend of my father's who can so help them to clear up their affairs by the sale of the house and furniture (the books and pictures only excepted), that they may have their little pittance in their own hands, with the full power of bestowing it hereafter on that man, woman, or child who shall in the course of years have brought home to each of their hearts the greatest number of grateful sensations. I will be that heir, if I can, because I will employ every honest means to stand foremost in their affections; and yet I both acknowledge, and am proud of, my brother's right to the fairest rivalship in so good a cause. He shall bring nephews and nieces to us all, and I will entail upon them my romantic notions, with that fund of contentment which Providence has given me, in addition to the wealth of all my three sisters. *

As to myself, I grow every day somewhat older, and much poorer; my station and my fortune bear no

* The worthy use made of it by two of them (for the younger added to her immediate elder's beneficent bequest) has been already noticed.

proportion; but this to me is no subject of repining, for my brother and sisters are well provided for, and I am at the height of my ambition; I am confident that in spending my last shilling I am doing what is right; and I am honest enough never to make away with one farthing which belongs to another.

But, to return to the interesting subject of your kind letter. In one of my last to my sisters, I have desired that a small but elegant monument of marble may be set up near the grave of the best of fathers. I am very desirous to see a drawing by Mr. Cumming, and a modest, yet manly inscription, penned by Dr. Robertson, Mr. Hume, Dr. Blair, or any one of my father's learned friends. I beg that a short estimate of the expense may be sent along with it to me, and my answer shall suffer no delay.

It gives me real pleasure to find that Lady Dick has set so high a value upon that token of grateful remembrance which my sisters delivered to her in my name. It could not be better bestowed than upon a woman whose many good qualities render you and your family so essentially happy. I beg of you to deliver my most affectionate compliments to them, and to Lady Dalrymple and her's. You know those friends in your neighbourhood who have an undoubted right to my sincere attachment, and you will do me a service in giving them the strongest assurances of its duration. Adieu, my dear uncle.

I ever am most affectionately your's,

R. M. Keith.

It was beneath the roof, and from the example of the father thus mourned and commemorated, that his two sons imbibed the principles of kindred honour and inte-

grity which through life so eminently distinguished them. And to the respect inspired by their parent's character they no doubt owed, in part at least, that singular good fortune, which ultimately triumphed over the usual difficulties attendant on the path of youthful adventurers in the fields of fame.

That this was the case, is evident from the tenor of the following private letter, in his own handwriting, from Mr. Pitt (afterwards Lord Chatham) to Mr. Keith. And while the promise contained in it in favour of the elder brother was ere long gratifyingly fulfilled, the interest of that great minister placed the younger (the *beau idéal* of a frank gallant British sailor) in the path of that further promotion and employment which paved the way for his ultimate appointment (as a reward for his brother's distinguished services) to the government of Jamaica; an office which he discharged with general esteem and approbation for several years, at the end of which, on his lamented decease, in 1777, a monument was erected to him by the House of Assembly.*

MR. PITT TO MR. KEITH.†

St. James's-square, December 28th, 1758.

[*Private.*]

Sir,

I cannot let the despatch from the office go away without accompanying it with a line to assure you

* The work entitled "Batson's Political Register," after enumerating his services in the navy from his entrance into it till the year 1769, adds, "In 1772, he received the honour of knighthood, as proxy for his brother, Sir Robert Murray Keith, then Ambassador at the Court of Vienna. In the ensuing year he was raised to the very honourable and consequential trust of Governor of the Island of Jamaica.

† Then Ambassador at the Court of Vienna.

of my sincere regard, and of the pleasure I should take in being of any use to Major Keith, on any proper occasion that shall present itself. You will have learned from Captain Keith himself the step his merit has given him in the navy, and I think myself much obliged to Lord Anson for doing, at my request, that *piece of justice* so readily. Continue, Sir, to do me the honour to believe me always at your service, and be assured of the real sentiments of esteem and consideration with which I remain,

Dear sir, your most obedient
and very humble servant,
W. Pitt.

That these were not mere words of ministerial courtesy, (albeit unwonted, even as such, from a dictator of proverbial haughtiness,) his creation, in the course of the following year, of a separate command for the military brother, and the appointment of the other to a 40-gun frigate, will be sufficient to prove. But though these might speak for themselves, it is difficult to resist the honourable testimony borne by the Premier's confidential secretary (when the time for this realization arrived) to the share which the individual worth of his *protégés* seem to have borne in the fulfilment of more than the most sanguine hopes of either.

MR. WOOD TO MR. KEITH.

Whitehall, July 7th, 1760.

Dear Sir,

According to all rules of civility I should have answered your obliging letter; but though I have delayed that, and omitted letting you know that both

your sons had obtained what they wanted, yet the business being done (and done by Mr. Pitt alone), I was easy about the rest, and I know you 'll forgive me. There is no doubt you would soon hear this from others, who might perhaps claim a merit in being your friends upon this occasion; but it is right that you should know that Mr. Pitt did the business, both with Lord Anson and Lord Barrington; and it will not be amiss that I should tell you, that whatever partiality Mr. Pitt may have towards you, he would not have interfered, did he not know your sons deserved his attention. They really do—and while they continue to go on so, they will be remembered.* Mr. Pitt directs me to make his compliments to you. May you and your sons long have a perfect enjoyment of each other! I beg you will excuse this hasty letter, and believe me, with the greatest truth and regard,

Dear Sir, your most obedient humble servant,

Robert Wood.

To the elder of these two sons, the ostensible subject of the present sketch, Sir Robert Murray Keith, it may be thought high time to revert. And it may serve incidentally to prove how reverential was the regard cherished in the family, for the name which its head so honourably bore, that the patronymic of "Robert" was successively bestowed on three sons; two of whom, dying in infancy, it was, in defiance of the superstitious feelings to which such a circumstance might have given

* A promise again fulfilled by the appointment of Sir Basil to a command on the West India Station, from the year 1766 to the end of 1769; when (in a letter to his sister) the warm-hearted tar owns he *wept* at parting with his officers, spite of the fine things said to him by the First Lord of the Admiralty.

rise, perseveringly conferred on a third, who survived, it is hoped, not to disgrace it.

He was born on the 20th September, 1730. From the important avocations of his father abroad, the early formation of his character must have devolved, in a great measure, on the "angel" of a mother whom, at the age of eleven, it was his misfortune to lose;* and while to this may probably be traced the tenderness and delicacy of feeling which distinguished her son's character—its manlier features, and strong soldier bias, as well as that unsophisticated relish for fun and frolic, which neither age nor etiquette could quench, may have taken their rise from that epitome of the world, in its mixture of ranks, its struggles, and competitions, nay, even its not altogether *bloodless* conflicts†—the High School of Edinburgh, as graphically described by Sir Walter Scott.

At what precise time this "radical" seminary—(amid whose collisions, and despite whose equality, the distinc-

* Her brother, Sir John Cunninghame, in announcing her death, (the result of a protracted labour of three days,) says, "Death was no terror to her—she bore his approach like a heroine, and carried the smile of an *angel* on her countenance till the moment she expired. So died the woman of the most virtues and fewest faults I ever knew." Her bereaved husband thus expresses himself: "I think no man ever lost more in one person; the most amiable of wives, the most faithful of friends, the best of mothers. Indeed I never knew her equal in all the relations of life."

† These last, indeed, long known under the significant title of *bickers*, in which large stones played a well-nigh fatal part—were so incompatible with the stiff and expensive childish costume of the period, that the nobility and gentry of Scotland, (then, according to Sir Robert's surviving sister a parcel of "happy beggars"—placed by their sense of their own position above the paltry distinctions of wealth)—by an agreement among themselves resolved to clothe their belligerent scions in a sheet armour styled *ticking*, since reserved for the more peaceful purposes of slumber.

tions of society seem nevertheless to have resumed their allotted place)—was exchanged for a higher and wider sphere of education, cannot now be ascertained. A letter, however, still extant, dated September, 1746, shows that the youth had ere then been removed to an academy in London, the detail of his pursuits at which proves that he was already designed for the army. "My present studies," he writes to his maternal uncle, Sir Alexander Dick, "are riding the great horse, fencing, French, fortification, music, and drawing;" some of the articles in the enumeration showing that elegant accomplishments were then deemed an essential part of a military education. That his classical studies (though here omitted) had not been neglected, his frequent playful quotations testify; as well as his being able, in the evening of life, to call to his aid Latin, as a colloquial language, in parts of Europe where it formed the only medium of intercourse. His facility indeed in the acquirement of languages was such, that not only did French (which he wrote and spoke like a native) serve him as a passport to the enjoyment of, as well as admission into the best foreign society, but with Dutch, German, and Italian he was perfectly conversant; and possessed besides a knowledge of several other dialects, (comprising what on one occasion he playfully called his "ten tongues,") with not one of which, however, could he make himself intelligible in remote districts of Hungary. It may serve as an encouragement to youths, (or rather to the relatives of such,) who show disinclination in early years for letter-writing, to have it under the hand of one of the most excellent and indefatigable of correspondents in after-life, that, at sixteen, he was both a "*bad scribe*,"—(though even then the assertion is belied by the bold character of the penmanship which, fifty years later, combined facility and ease

with copper-plate-like accuracy)—and "*exceedingly lazy.*"

How soon the latter disqualification was exchanged for diligence as a letter-writer, we know not; but sundry "copies of verses," as they were then styled, in which the writer's playfulness sought vent, during the monotony of some years' service among the fens of Holland, in one of the then popular regiments, (composed chiefly of his countrymen,) known by the name of the "Scotch Dutch," have found their way into the collections of the day. They are of too local and juvenile a cast to justify their rescue from oblivion. One alone, a parody written on the supposed disastrous event, (viz., the reduction of the corps,) to whose fortunate occurrence, perhaps, the whole subsequent career of the disbanded "captain" might be legitimately traced, may be given, simply to show with what lightness of heart the first misfortune—and a serious one it then seemed—of the poor soldier's life was met and commemorated. To be *reduced* at two-and-twenty, and deprived of his commission in one service, without any very definite prospect of employment in another, would have damped the spirits perhaps of any one but a Keith. The effusion is entitled—

A PARAPHRASE ON COLIN'S COMPLAINT; WRITTEN AT BERGEN-OP-ZOOM, MARCH, 1752, ON THE REDUCTION THAT THEN HAPPENED.

By the side of the slow-running Zoom
A poor pension'd Captain was laid,
And while he bewail'd his sad doom
A knapsack supported his head.

The Lieutenants who heard him complain,
With a sigh to his sighs did reply;
And the Ensigns, who shared in his pain,
Stood mournfully murmuring by.

Alas ! what a fool have I been
(Then sadly complaining he said)
To have changed my old yellow for green—
'Twere better by far I had staid.*

But I was ambitious and young,
And the name of a "Captain" seem'd great,
Nor did I repent it was done
Till now, when I find 'tis too late.

How foolish was I to believe
That reduction would do me no wrong ;
Or that I should have a reprieve,
Because I had flugel'd † so long !

Poor I, who till now was so gay,
Must soon from that station remove ;
Go, clothed like a ploughman, in grey,
Or live in a cottage on love.

What though I have skill to complain,
Though the Muses my temples have crown'd ;
What though, when they hear my soft strain,
The Subs sit all weeping around ?

Ah, Captain ! thy hopes are in vain !
Thy sash and thy gorget resign ;
Thy spontoon thou must yield to a swain
Whose regiment is older than thine.

All ye, my companions so dear,
Who share in those hardships of mine
Whatever you suffer forbear,
Forbear at your fate to repine ;

Our masters have sent us to range,
The wants of the state to supply ;
'Twas their's to complete the great change,
'Tis our's to be pension'd—and die !

How long it was before the commission in the English service, alluded to in the following letter was obtained,

* Alluding to a change for promotion from an older to a junior battalion.

† The leader in the exercises of a company, or squad, is styled, in military phrase, a "flugel man."

is unknown. But much of the writer's subsequent distinction, and of the fitness of the reduced captain of the Scotch Dutch, for a separate command under one of the first generals in the age, may be traceable to the employment of the interval in a sedulous cultivation of military science, in one of those German schools of the art of war, where its knowledge was to be purchased by a course of privations and hardships, of which the soldiers of our day have little idea. A family tradition has preserved, that during the rigours of winter, in the garrison, where the future Colonel of "Keith's Highlanders" was serving his painful though voluntary apprenticeship, the scarcity of fuel, and necessity for mounting guard over the scanty supply of firewood, his shivering comrades were in the habit of pilfering from each other, induced, in the young Scotchman, a habit of somnambulism, which was first detected in consequence of the unaccountably hacked condition of his sword, with which he in his sleep belaboured imaginary robbers.

His situation is thus described in a letter to his eldest sister, dated from London, in March, 1758.

My dear Jannie,

Since I received yours, I have been in a sort of hurry, running after those who I knew were my father's friends, and might be of use to me. They have received me kindly, and several of those in power have assured me, that his Majesty intended to advance me, in consideration of my father's services, which have given entire satisfaction.

I should be sorry to begin by complaining of my present situation, though it is by no means advantageous; as I find myself the youngest supernumerary captain of

a new battalion, without a company; which, after having been eleven years a captain, and a month a major, is no very flattering prospect. If there were any hopes of my father's succeeding in his present negotiation, we should certainly feel the good effects of it; if he does not, it will not be his fault, and we must take patience.

It is very natural for you to be curious about every thing that concerns him;* only in answer to your questions on the subject, I scarce know how to begin. His outward appearance is as much that of a genteel, unaffected man of the world as it is possible. His conversation is gay and unrestrained; which, added to the known probity of his character, has gained him an universal esteem. His modesty with regard to himself and his family has perhaps been a hurt to him, yet it is not the least amiable of his qualities, and gives him an air of gentlemanly independence, which no intriguing favour-begging courtier ever attained to. In short, he is the creature of nobody; and whatever he has got, has been by merit, and attention to business. If ever he thinks fit to ask an essential favour, I believe he will find it no hard matter to obtain it, at least as long as his Majesty lives; how he stands with the Prince I know not. I shall only add that he *walks* as much as ever; and, thank God! his constitution is not the least broken; though I cannot help being uneasy at the abominable climate he is gone to.†

Yours, affectionately,

R. M. Keith.

* Mr. Keith had been for several years a stranger to his family, probably from the period of his appointment to Vienna, in 1748. It is probable that during his son's late sojourn in Germany, his father and he had met.

† Mr. Keith had recently been transferred (in consequence of the rupture with Austria) to the Embassy at Petersburgh.

The prognostic above hazarded was not long in being realized. In the month of December of the same year, we find Captain Keith, after an active campaign under the celebrated Prince Ferdinand of Brunswick, filling important though temporary situations in the allied armies. The letter is such a playful one; its *mélange* of doggrel rhyme, and more serious verse, so characteristic, that at the risk of the imputation of trifling on the threshold of graver matters, we cannot resist it. It runs thus:—

Munster, Dec. 8th, 1758.

Dear Jannie,

Having sheathed the sword for a space, and finding myself somewhat idle, I have resolved, for my own amusement and your instruction, to give Pegasus the bridle; and though there is nothing that inspires very lively ideas in this dull town of Munster, yet you know a man has many resources, who is at once a poet and a punster; for lyric, satiric, and soft panegyric, ode, opera, and sonnet, the buskin or bonnet, though each has a style that's unlike to the other, yet all are combined in the style of your brother. So, when to cheer the low and drooping soul, a skilful hand prepares the genial bowl, in just proportion rum and water pours, with sugar sweetens, and with lemon sours; though tastes so different seem to be at odds, yet joined in punch make nectar for the gods! Behold how this description borrows strength from apt similitude.

Dec. 15th.

Thus far had my muse proceeded, with uncommon success and agility, when a stupid, thick-skulled enemy to genius interrupted my career; nor has it been in my power to resume till now, for the following reasons.

My last letter informed you that we expected impatiently the arrival of a courier from England. He arrived three days ago, and brought me the unwelcome tidings that my honest general was appointed to command the British troops here at Munster, during the absence of Lord George Sackville, who is gone over about business. As both my duty and inclination engage me to him, I was obliged to lay aside all thoughts of seeing Caledonia this winter, which had been my favourite scheme. However, that I might not remain without occupation, I am honoured with the double employment, of adjutant-general, and secretary to the commander-in-chief; that is to say, till those gentlemen return; for my good fortune will never allow me to be in effect one or other. In order to show the great folks that I was proof against disappointment, and that the prospect of so much business did not depress, but rather animate my genius, I presented them next day with the following verses, the subject of which is an inexhaustible fund of panegyric.

LINES ON PRINCE FERDINAND OF BRUNSWICK.

No more shall Fiction lend her aid to Truth,
And fabled heroes teach aspiring youth;
In Ferdinand's example they shall find
Lessons that mend the heart, and form the mind.
Behold him, glorious in the conquer'd field;
George's avenger and his country's shield;
Humanity and Justice by his side,
And the loud voice of Liberty his guide:
Then mark that soul which sparkles in his eye,
And learn for her to conquer or to die.
But when again the winter storms descend,
And the rude blasts the active war suspend,
See him, in social life, by all beloved,
And truly blest—in being self-approved.

> Free with a few, and easy in the crowd,
> Too great, too wise, too worthy to be proud;
> The joys his bosom feels, and virtues give,
> Teach with what pleasure honest men may live.

Again it appeared as if (born under a lucky star) the seemingly adverse circumstances of Major Keith's career were destined, like successive waves, to float him on the "tide that leads to fortune." The disappointment above mentioned, in his projects of spending the winter at home, not only afforded him an opportunity of gaining experience and manifesting merit in the various military employments enumerated in his letter, but secured to him the inestimable advantage of the life-long friendship of Marshal Conway: the "honest general" (and well might he be thus honourably commemorated), to whom duty and inclination equally prompted a kindred spirit to adhere. With him, and his amiable wife Lady Aylesbury, even the "dull town of Munster" must have acquired charms; nor was Major Keith likely to repine at a detention which domesticated him in such society.

But stranger still, the disgrace and ruin which (well or ill deserved) fell, after the battle of Minden, on another commander, with whom his fortunes seem to have become at that period connected, were so far from involving in them (as at a period of such factious virulence might easily have happened), the innocent subordinate, selected for a very invidious and hazardous office—that this very undesirable selection, actually placed the young soldier in circumstances to claim in person the unforgotten promise of the Prime Minister of England. That he did not do so in vain, the following letter will show.

MAJOR KEITH TO HIS FATHER.

London, August 21st, 1759.

DEAR FATHER,

Soon after I wrote to you from the battle-field of Tonnenhausen, the unhappy censure passed upon Lord G. Sackville, which has doubtless reached your ears, and which I hope was unmerited as well as unexpected, obliged his lordship to desire to be recalled from the command in Germany. I shall not enter at present into the merits of an affair, the greatest part of which I was not witness to, as I happened to be differently employed at the time. However, I was chosen to be the bearer of his resignation, which I accordingly delivered, and it was accepted.

I am, I hope, incapable of abandoning a man because he is the victim of popular clamour; but after having discharged my duty to him, and knowing that I could be no longer upon the staff, or on actual service, I thought myself bound to wait upon your friends, and declare my resolution of serving in any place and without any terms. I received the kindest, and perhaps the most ineffectual assurances from those to whom I was admitted; but some days after, I got access to Mr. Pitt, who inquired into my situation with a generous and friendly concern. He said he wished your family well, and would serve me whenever it was in his power. Soon after it was determined, though not without some opposition, to form a little corps of Highlanders and send them to Germany. Three hundred supernumeraries of Lord J. Murray's corps were ready at Newcastle. Mr. Pitt *removed all obstacles*, and gave me the sole command of them. This corps is to be augmented to five companies and to belong entirely to me, with the

rank of Major-Commandant. I kissed hands to-day; am to embark the three first companies, as soon as possible, for Embden. They are to be in Highland dress, and be called the Highland Volunteers.

The happiness I felt in so distinguished a mark of favour, was increased by the manner in which it was bestowed upon me. Mr. Wood has acted throughout with warmth and affection; and he this day told me he thought it fair to acquaint you, that you have a right to call upon your other friends upon a proper occasion, as no person can pretend to the smallest share in this, except Mr. Pitt.

I will not say what I can do, but I have an excellent opportunity, and am unworthy of favour if I cannot improve it. My command is entirely separate, and only under Prince Ferdinand and Lord Granby. I shall probably be with the army in Germany before I can hear from you, therefore please direct for me there. Basil was so good as to come from Deal to see me. He is a noble-spirited gentlemanly young man as ever I saw. Mr. Pitt will, I am sure, continue his good offices to my brother, whose character he is pleased to approve of. I need not say he deserves your thanks.

I am, dear Father,

Your dutiful son,

R. M. K.

Having given, in his own simple and manly narrative, the account of an appointment, so gratifying in its mode and nature to every feeling of the gallant soldier, it is to other sources we must look for his exploits, and those of the countrymen whom he led into the field.

"It was," says General Stewart of Garth, in his admirable history of the Highland Regiments, in which he has embodied the substance of all the voluminous

despatches and records of the time, "from among these Highlanders of the old school that two regiments, commanded by Major Robert Murray Keith and Major J. Campbell, of Dunoon, were formed. Major Keith had served in the Scots Brigade in Holland, and after the death of his illustrious relative Field-Marshal Keith, at the battle of Hoch-Kirken in 1758, had returned to England, when he was appointed to command three newly-raised companies of Highlanders, consisting of 105 men each. With this small corps he joined the allied army in Germany under Prince Ferdinand, in August, 1759.

"The opinion early formed of this corps may be estimated from the circumstance of their having been ordered to attack the enemy the *third day* after they arrived in the camp of the allies. In what manner this duty was executed, may be learned from the following statement:—

"'The Highlanders under Major Keith, supported by the hussars of Luchner, who commanded the whole detachment, attacked the village of Eyback, sword in hand, where Baron Fremont's regiment of dragoons were posted, and routed them with great slaughter. The greater part of the regiment was killed and many prisoners taken, together with 200 horses and all their baggage. The Highlanders distinguished themselves greatly by their intrepidity, which was the more remarkable, as they were no other than raw recruits just arrived from their own country, and altogether unacquainted with regular discipline.

"'By the advice of Prince Ferdinand, founded on a favourable opinion of the conduct of this little corps, orders were given to augment it to eight hundred men, with officers in proportion, and at the same time to raise another regiment in the Highlands, both of which

were to be placed under the command of his Royal Highness. When the men had marched down from the Highlands, Keith's regiment was embodied at Perth, and Campbell's at Stirling. They were embarked for Germany, and joined the allied army under Prince Ferdinand, in 1760.* Though they had but little time for discipline, and none for experience, they were placed in the grenadier brigade—a distinguished honour for so young a corps.'

"The campaign having opened on the 29th July, 1760, the Hereditary Prince of Brunswick marched from the camp at Kelle with a body of troops, including the two battalions of English Grenadiers and two of Highlanders; and on the 30th, in a smart action, defeated the enemy with considerable loss. The Prince, in writing to George the Second an account of the battle, after stating the loss of the enemy at 1500 men, and more than an equal number of prisoners, adds—'ours, which was moderate, fell chiefly on Maxwell's brave battalion of English Grenadiers, and the two regiments of Scots Highlanders, *which did wonders.*'"

On a subsequent occasion—that of a night-attack on a fortress—he says: "The Scots Highlanders mounted the breaches, sword in hand, supported by the chasseurs. The service was *complete,* and the troops displayed equal courage, soldier-like conduct, and activity." Another account says: "The brigade formed of Grenadiers and Highlanders distinguished themselves remarkably on this occasion."

The brigade having been ordered, on the 5th of October, 1760, to join the Hereditary Prince, arrived

* It was to this consummation of Major (now Colonel) Keith's hopes, and *not* to the first appointment, that Mr. Wood referred, when he said to Mr. Keith, his son had (through Mr. Pitt again) *got all that he wanted.*

on the 14th at a very critical moment, when the allied army, having been attacked by Marshal de Castries, were compelled to retire. The Prince having been joined by the above, and other troops, determined to attack the marshal in his turn. The action was well sustained from five till nine in the morning, when the Prince gave the signal for retreat. The Highlanders, it is said by various contemporary authorities, were the "*first to attack, and the last to retreat,* and kept their ground in the face of every disadvantage, even after the troops on their right and left had retired. The Highlanders were so exasperated by the loss they sustained, that it was with difficulty they could be withdrawn, till an aide de camp was sent from the Prince to say, that longer persistence would be an useless waste of human life."

"In the battle of Fellinghausen, in July, 1761, the conduct of the Highlanders (who had now acquired the character of veteran soldiers) was again honoured by a flattering mark of approbation by the commander-in-chief. 'His Serene Highness Prince Ferdinand of Brunswick has been graciously pleased to signify his entire approbation of their conduct on the 15th and 16th of July. The soldier-like perseverance of the Highland regiments in resisting and repulsing the repeated attacks of the *chosen troops of France,* has deservedly gained them the highest honour. The intrepidity of the little band of Highlanders merits the highest praise.' He adds—'The humanity and generosity with which the soldiers treated the great flock of prisoners they took, does them as much honour as their subduing the enemy.'"

To these contemporary testimonies, collected with honest pride in the reputation of his countrymen by General Stewart, it is gratifying to be able to subjoin

the letter written almost from the field of battle—where, indeed, the *chosen troops* of France, under their most distinguished commanders, had sustained a memorable defeat—by the commandant of the brave little band who had so materially contributed to the victory.

COLONEL KEITH TO MR. KEITH.

Camp, at Kirchdenckern, July 19th, 1761.

My dear Father,

The last week has been a very busy one, and the half-naked gentry have not been idle. On the 12th instant, the enemy attacked the posts in front of our army, and my battalion, *being at hand*, was employed in repulsing them. This we had the happiness to effect, but it cost my *little family* one captain killed, one captain and two subalterns wounded; and in all, between forty and fifty privates. On the 15th, the French made dispositions for a general engagement; Marshal Broglio being to attack Lord Granby's corps, which is upon the left of the army, while Prince Soubize attacked the Hereditary Prince upon the right, and the Prince de Condé the centre. On the evening of the 15th, Broglio, with a large corps endeavoured to turn our left, but was repulsed in several attacks with great loss. The two battalions of Highlanders *were there*, and suffered considerably. My poor major, Campbell, was killed dead, and one subaltern; and I had one captain and one subaltern wounded.

The next day, 16th, Broglio began to engage our left about four in the morning; but after many fruitless attempts (the detail of which I shall not pretend to give) he was forced to retire in the greatest confusion. Six pair of colours, nine pieces of cannon, and above

1500 prisoners was taken in the pursuit, The loss of the French in all may amount to 5000; that of the allies I am not certain of, but I should imagine it does not exceed 1200.

All our generals are unhurt, and all your acquaintance safe. Duke Ferdinand was pleased to honour the brigade I belong to with his particular thanks for their behaviour, and as a further mark of his approbation of the Highlanders, he deigned to *embrace your son* in presence of all the general officers, which favour he accompanied with the most flattering expressions of regard for the brave little bodies.

While the action lasted on the left, M. de Soubize manœuvred his whole body in front of the Hereditary Prince; but never came to a close engagement. Perhaps his attack depended on the success of those upon the left; however, he retired at the same time with Mons. de Broglio, and without suffering any considerable loss. They have made a retrograde march, and we are at present quiet.

I am every day more obliged to Lord Granby's goodness. He desires to be remembered to you, as do Generals Waldegrave, Townshend, and Douglas, and Roby Hepburn. Excuse the incoherence of the above narrative. You will soon have a more distinct account of the action; which takes its name from the village of Fellinghausen, in which I now am.

Dear Father,

Your dutiful and affectionate son,

R. M. K.

On the news of this victory, eclipsed as it has since been by actions of gigantic magnitude and importance, public thanksgivings were ordered in the churches of

London. And Walpole thus writes:—"We have been pretty well accustomed to victories of late, and yet the last is as much as we know how to bear decently. It seals all our other conquests. The King may be crowned at Aix la Chapelle, like Charlemagne, if he pleases. Of all our glories, none ever gave me such joy as this last. Mr. Conway is with Prince Ferdinand, and safe; indeed everybody you know, is. We lost but one officer of rank, Lieutenant-Colonel Keith;* and two wounded; a Lieutenant-Colonel Marlay, and Captain Harry Townshend. No particulars are yet come."

In June 1762, these corps formed part of the troops under Prince Ferdinand, in the successful attack on the French army, under the command of Marshals D'Estrèes and Soubize, at Graïbenstein. The victory was in itself so complete, and attained with so little loss, that it appeared rather the result of a surprise than a regular engagement. The loss of the enemy, in killed, wounded, and prisoners, amounted to upwards of 4000 men, including 200 officers;† while that of the allies did not exceed 700 men. "The British Guards, Grenadiers, and *Highlanders*, under the command of the Marquis of Granby, behaved with a bravery *not to be paralleled;* especially our Grenadiers and Highlanders. They behaved nobly, and took as many prisoners as they had men.

* Happily a mistake, occasioned by the precipitation with which the account was despatched. It was (as has been seen by Colonel Keith's letter) his *major*, Campbell, who was unfortunately killed.

† This peculiarity seems not confined to the engagement last mentioned. After the former (that of Fellinghausen) a letter from the armies contained the following "tragedy" (as it too truly styles it), from the mouth of a French officer. "Of the two lieutenant-generals killed (Rougé himself told me) the Duc de Havre, his father-in-law, was one, and his uncle another; two brothers, lieutenant-colonels, killed by the same shot —himself, and *his whole regiment, prisoners.*"

"After every engagement some mark of favour was conferred on the two corps. But while Prince Ferdinand was preparing to lay siege to Zegenchayn, a conclusion was put to all further hostilities by the signature of the preliminaries of peace. This took place on the 15th of November, 1762, and thus ended three campaigns, highly honourable to the courage and character of the British army; which, as it was uniformly placed in the post of danger, obtained a high degree of celebrity. Of this reputation the little band of Highlanders earned their full share. Having been placed in the same brigade with the Grenadiers, and opposed to the *élite* of the enemy's troops, over which they were uniformly victorious, their military character was accordingly well established."

After this, the two regiments were ordered home; and, on their march through Holland, were received in various towns with acclamations; the women presenting laurel leaves to the soldiers, and even the children attempting to imitate their garb and broadswords. Some said that these demonstrations arose from the respect with which they and their broadswords had inspired the common enemy; while others attributed the kind feeling to the friendship and intimacy which had subsisted between the Dutch, and the soldiers of the Scottish brigade, so long established in Holland. Whatever may be the cause, the reception was equally honourable to both parties.

The regiments, on landing at Tilbury Fort, were marched to Scotland. Though hospitably received in all the towns through which they passed, their reception at Derby was the most remarkable. No payment was taken from them for quarters, and subscriptions were raised to give gratuities to the men. For this cordial reception, here, as in Holland, different reasons were

assigned. While some asserted that the whole was done as a testimony of respect for military gallantry, and the services they had performed for their country; some alleged that it originated in other and more peculiar motives. The Highlanders it was alleged, were supposed to be Jacobites, as many in the north-western provinces then still were,—and the people remembered with gratitude, that the rebels had conducted themselves with unexampled propriety at Derby; and had respected the persons and property of the inhabitants. Nor was it forgotten, that, though in open insurrection, and in situations where the greatest turbulence and licentiousness were to be expected, nothing of the kind had occurred; and that no ill usage or insult had been offered by those men, who, (as a gentleman of Derby writing at the time to a friend, remarked) "said grace with great seeming devotion, before and after meals—*like any Christian!*"

If such was the light in which they were regarded by their fellow-countrymen in Britain, it may prove not less amusing to quote a curious article from the Vienna Gazette; giving some idea of the feelings excited by the sight of the Scottish mountaineers, in their native garb, and the opinions entertained of them among our German allies. It runs thus:—

"The Scotch Highlanders are a people totally different in their dress, manners and temper, from the other inhabitants of Britain. They are *caught from the mountains when young*, and still run with a surprising degree of swiftness. As they are strangers to fear, they make very good soldiers, when disciplined. The men are of low stature, and most of them old, or very young.

"They discover an extraordinary submission and

love for their officers, who are all young and handsome. From the goodness of their dispositions in every thing, for the boors are much better treated by *these savages* than by the polished French and English,* (which, by-the-bye, shows the rectitude of human nature before it is vitiated by example and prejudice,) it is to be hoped their King's laudable, though late, endeavours to *civilise and instruct them in the principles of Christianity*,† will meet with success! The French held them at first in great contempt, but they have met with them so often of late, and seen them in the front of so many battles, that they firmly believe there are twelve battalions of them in the army, instead of two. Monsieur Broglio himself has lately said, that he once wished he were a man of six feet high, but that now he is reconciled to his size, since he has seen the wonders performed by the little mountaineers. He might well say so!"

On the reduction (which it is scarce possible to avoid regretting), in July, 1763, of the brave band over which he had so long presided, and which we have seen he touchingly styles "his little family," the feelings of Colonel Keith must have been akin to those of his gallant brother, when a tear dimmed his eye on parting from his ship's company. He must, like Othello, have felt his "occupation gone;" and though little of the "pomp and circumstance" of war had attended the arduous struggles in which he had been engaged, there

* The conduct of the Highlanders, both in quarters and in the field, in 1816, as well as the opinion expressed of them by another great Captain of France, proves their national character to have little changed.

† "No trait in the character of these supposed *pagans* was more noticed in the army, than the respect paid by them to their chaplain, Mr. Macaulay; and the influence he possessed over their minds and actions. Many of the men, when they got into any little scrape, were more anxious to conceal it from the chaplain, than from the commanding-officer."

was abundance of glory and of excitement to make "piping times of peace" distasteful and monotonous. How this monotony was beguiled, we have no data to ascertain; except that 1765 saw him in London, and consequently returned from the visit to Paris, where, in 1764, his father's illustrious correspondent, Marshal Münnich, represents him (equally to the honour of his quondam antagonists and his own) as experiencing a *brilliant reception.*

The father and son had here the gratification of meeting; and a letter from the latter to his favourite aunt, Lady Dalrymple, even while chiefly occupied with details of mutual friends, and pleasing accounts of the joint hospitalities they were sharing from public and private connexions, shows such an early and thorough appreciation of the hollowness, as well as dulness, of the courtly circles in which it was hereafter to be his lot to mingle, that it may account for the scanty share allotted to them in his familiar correspondence.

COLONEL KEITH TO LADY DALRYMPLE.*

London, March 5th, 1765.

DEAR AUNT,

I return you a thousand thanks for your kind letter, and for the excellent anecdote of your *courtly* friend. I have a whole budget for you of the same sort; and we shall compare notes at meeting with the greater satisfaction, that I can assure you we agree entirely in our thoughts upon that subject. I have of late had a nearer view of those unfortunate people than ever; and at the same time that I think many of them deserve contempt, I cannot help feeling some pity for them.

* Widow of Sir Robert Dalrymple, and mother to the Dowager Countess of Balcarres; and *twin-sister* to the mother of Sir R. Murray Keith.

They are so completely miserable, so unable to taste present enjoyments, and so ardently anxious after distant objects; so cordial in their hatred to one another, and so fatally deprived of all hope of friendship; that one should imagine their example would deter others from imitating them. But I grow sententious, and am consequently in danger of relapsing into dulness. When I have the pleasure of seeing you, which I hope may be soon, I hope to convince you that though I I have had one severe fit of that distemper, it has not yet become habitual, or changed my constitution in the least. I assure you I am to all intents and purposes the old man you have ever known me; though, I own some of my best qualities are in danger of lying dormant, while I remain here. I hate wisdom and importance; everybody here affects one or other; but I hope to be able soon to give a loose to my own natural insignificance. Meantime, dear Madam, I am in every mood, and for every possible reason, most sincerely and affectionately yours,

R. M. K.

In a letter of the same date to his sister, he thus playfully alludes to his own and his brother's uncertain prospects:—

"You will perhaps be inquisitive to know what are the prospects of certain young gentlemen, who came here in search of employment? Why, truly, these heroes are as yet totally in the dark as to that matter: however, time will show all, and 'tis at least a comfort to have tried to do what was right."

The "pleasure and pride" expressed by Mr. Pitt (in a note dated 9th June of this year) in having a "*share*

in doing justice to distinguished merit"—must have referred to the procuring of rank in the British regular army for Colonel Keith; as in a letter bearing the date of 1769, he is styled "late Commandant of the 87th Foot;" a regiment probably involved in a subsequent reduction, as the epithet of "late" is soon after applied to it, as well as to its commander.

It is probable that this second loss of occupation in the military line, the avowed patronage of the great minister above quoted, as well as his own knowledge of the affairs of Germany, and acquaintance with its language and that of France, may have conspired to turn the thoughts of the son of so able a diplomatist towards his father's profession; and to point him out to that father's many surviving political friends, as a worthy successor to the paternal vocation. Be this as it may, his appointment as Envoy to the Court of Saxony took place in 1769; and the regrets expressed by the *élite* of the society of England, at the loss of his company, show that the interval had not been unprofitably spent, in cultivating the unalienable good-will and affection of a large circle of friends.

The *côterie* in which Sir Robert (then Colonel Keith), during his sojourn in England, chiefly mingled, was a band of gentlemen, who, under the rather equivocal, but then fashionable title of the "*Gang*," are constantly alluded to in the following correspondence, in which some of its members will be found bearing a principal part. Though styled a Club, it differed from those both of its own day and ours, in its very small number (limited to twelve), and its being a mere voluntary association, cemented by private friendship, and congeniality of disposition.

It consisted originally of Lord Frederick Campbell (brother to the Duke of Argyle, and Lord Registrar of

Scotland), Mr. Bradshaw (Treasurer of the Navy, and afterwards one of the Lords of the Admiralty), Mr. Rigby (Paymaster of the Forces), Mr. Chamier (Under-Secretary of State), General Grosvenor (father of the venerable field-marshal of that name*), Mr. Cox (the well-known army agent), Mr. Harley, M.P., Mr. Bagot, and Sir Robert Murray Keith, with the several gentlemen at the head of the house of Drummond; who seem to have united, in a very enviable degree, undisputed pre-eminence in the financial world, high family connexions, and great political influence, with much enjoyment of rural pursuits, at their various country seats, in England and Scotland. The footing upon which this band of brothers lived, as well as the thirst for English news, and home intelligence, which continued unabated in Sir Robert Keith during his twenty years' expatriation (the *key*, indeed, perhaps, to that twenty years' correspondence), may be found in the following *jeu d'esprit*, still extant in the handwriting of his no doubt astonished secretary; and duly despatched to England, in a moment of indignation at the silence of his friends, shortly after his arrival in Saxony.

TO H. DRUMMOND, ESQ.

Dresden, 1769.

SIR,

I am sorry to acquit myself of a very mournful duty, in acquainting you that his Excellency, Robert

* To whose kindness the Editor is indebted for the elegant engraved ticket by which its members were summoned to a monthly dinner:—A figure seated, embracing in one hand the symbol of fraternity, the fasces, and displaying in the other the mystic number, 12, surrounded by the goblet and other emblems of conviviality, chastened by that sobering memento, a skull. The device is surmounted by the words, "The Gang," and beneath is the following motto,

"Frui Paratis."

Murray Keith, his Majesty's Envoy Extraordinary at this Court, late Commandant of the 87th Regiment of foot, Lord of the Manors of Murrayshall, Deans, Boghouse, &c., bade adieu to this transitory state, on the night of Wednesday last, immediately after the arrival of the English post, which contained nothing but a London Chronicle.

I had been alarmed, during these two months past, at the dejection of spirits which had often seized his Excellency; and particularly on post nights. I often heard him mutter some strange names, such as Bessy,* Tatty,† Ferry,‡ &c., &c., and on many occasions he even went so far as to wish them all at Old Nick (that was his Excellency's expression) together with a score of Drummonds, Campbells, and Mairs.

On the above-mentioned evening, he called me to his bed-side, and spoke to me in these terms:—"Mr. O'Carroll, how many friends do you think you have in the world?" "Sir," said I, "besides your Excellency, whose friendship does me honour, I am happy enough to believe I have three or four fast friends."

"You are a blockhead, Mr. O'Carroll," (said the Envoy with great warmth), "for believing any such thing. There is no such being existing as a true friend. I thought I had a dozen, male and female; but now I am convinced there is not one of them all would give a Soho ticket for my soul and body. Tuck me up, Master O'Carroll; bury me at your leisure, and let me give you this last bit of advice. Treat mankind like wolves and tigers; eat and drink, and be merry, if you can; and be sure you break the ten commandments every day of your life!"

* Lady Eliza Drummond, wife of H. Drummond, Esq.

† Mrs. Drummond, wife to Robert Drummond, Esq.

‡ Lady Frederick Campbell, widow of Earl Ferrers.

These were the last words that great minister pronounced, and in repeating them, I am penetrated with the sense of the irreparable loss his family and country have sustained in him. My affliction is hardly to be expressed. It is, however, the only excuse I can allege for the trouble you now receive from, Sir,

Your most obedient and most humble servant,

Wm. O'Carroll.

P. S.—His Excellency has bequeathed £10,000 to the society called the "*Gang*," the interest of which sum is to be laid out in teaching the members of the said society, together with their wives and children, to read and write.

Some time previously to the date of this characteristic effusion, from the pen of one to whom (as his correspondence through life will prove) public news regarding the country he loved, and tidings of those dear to him there, were the "Elixir vitæ,"—"food and raiment," worth a "Jew's eye," and a "king's ransom," Sir R. M. Keith had arrived at his destination. A trip to Paris, where, as we have seen, he had on a previous occasion won golden opinions from the then acknowledged arbiters of taste, had preceded his entrance on his new functions; for the light and courtly duties of which he was as specially fitted by his natural urbanity and genteel accomplishments, as he was for the more arduous ones which succeeded them, by his business-talents, integrity, patriotism, and thorough knowledge of mankind.

How completely amid the *gêne* and etiquette of the former, he was "the old man" he styles himself in his letter to his aunt, unchilled by ceremonial, uninfected by "dulness," will be seen by extracts from a few

familiar letters of this period which have been preserved. The little relish he felt for the stately accompaniments of his new vocation, and his retaining, amid them all, his home tastes and social predilections (a preference which accompanied him to the close of his diplomatic career), must have so endeared him to his English friends, that no man in Europe, it has been said by competent authorities, discharged these repugnant functions, either with a better grace, or more apparent and unvarying cheerfulness.

COLONEL KEITH TO HIS SISTER.

Dresden, October 22nd, 1769.

DEAR ANNE,

I never received your letter from Bristol, nor the account of your adventure at the White Bear in Piccadilly.* Permit me to doubt a little of the great philosophy you pretend to have possessed, in being hurried through the great capital in the manner Sancho Panza was through the air upon the wooden horse. Maiden Misses have more curiosity; but, at the same time, I do justice to the goodness of your heart, which made you forget *self*, amidst the affliction of your friends. What an elegant society is now to be found at the Hermitage,† of no less than four ladies, all of whom have seen London and its wonders! What the deuce is the matter with your magistrates, proprietors, &c., that they don't set about repairing your bridge‡ immediately? The leaders of your metropolis have a rooted

* By some ludicrous mistake, Miss Anne Keith had been conveyed to that *plebeian* hostelry.

† The villa near Edinburgh, inhabited, on his retirement from office, by Mr. Keith.

‡ The bridge called the North Bridge, uniting the New and Old Town, on its first erection, had given way.

aversion to elegance and ornament. There is not a Keith among you all, who is half so anxious about the New Town as I am; though it is more than probable I shall never be proprietor of a single stone within its extent. I wish you would build half as fast or as well as we do here; where near a thousand of the best houses were burnt down during the Prussian siege. I have a daily pleasure in seeing houses, churches, and squares, rising out of their ruins, and yet, when our town is finished, it won't be above twice as large as your infant city. But it is light, straight, white, tidy, and every single house has more ornament than a whole parish with you. It is the fault of the young women amongst you, that don't keep the men in better order; for as long as they are permitted to be slovens in their clothes and linen, it is impossible they should acquire the taste for elegant houses. I am soon to exchange my habitation, in which I have but *seven-and-twenty rooms,* for one where I can have more elbow room for self and *suite.*

Now I'm about it, I'll give you a little sketch of my way of living. Morning, *eight o'clock:*—Dish of coffee, half a basin of tea, *billets doux,* embroiderers, toymen, and tailors. *Ten:*—Business of Europe,—with a little music now and then, *pour égayer les affaires. Twelve:—Devoirs,* at one or other of the Courts (for we have three or four). From thence, to fine ladies, toilettes, and tender things. *Two:*—Dine in public,—three courses and a dessert; venture upon half a glass of *pure wine,* to exhilarate the spirits, without hurting the complexion. *Four:*—Rendezvous, sly visits, declarations, *éclaircissemens,* &c. &c. *Six:*—Politics, philosophy, and whist. *Seven:*—Opera, *appartement,* or private party. A world of business; jealousies, fears, poutings, &c. After settling all these jarring interests,

play a single rubber at whist, *en attendant le souper. Ten*:—Pick the wing of a partridge, *propos galans*, scandal, and *petites chansons*. Crown the feast with a bumper of Burgundy from the fairest hand; and at twelve, steal away mysteriously,—*home to bed!*

There's a pretty lutestring kind of a life for you! and all (as you perceive) plainly within the verge of the ten commandments. And yet, would you believe it? I am such a vulgar dog at bottom, as to have dull, plodding matrimony ever running in my head. Reason me out of this folly, if you can; otherwise you must take the labouring oar in finding out the *phœnix* I have so long been in search of. I must and will be married, that's poz!—and I will have a British dame, that's pozer! —— —— would make a noble Dresden wife, and do honour to the embassy: but I suspect the little jade would turn the tables upon his Excellency, and that her four-and-twenty hours would be still busier than the above journal. No! I must have a sober, staid, sensible helpmate; five-and-twenty, at least. I laugh at beauty, and despise riches; but I positively insist upon romantic delicacy and the finest of feelings. My friend Lady Die will assist you in your search after this *paragon*. I am proud of her ladyship's partiality for me, and would have given the world to have known it at a proper season. Assure her, however, that I am not quite so great a puppy as I appear to be. So much for nonsense. In sober sadness, my great grievance in this world is Basil and his ragged fortunes.* Do plot, project, plan among you, and point out to me wherever I can put any iron in the fire to advantage. I have the comfort to think that

* Admiral (afterwards Sir Basil Keith), at this time unemployed; but whose "ragged fortunes" it was his brother's happy lot to raise by his own distinguished services.

Basil is persuaded of my warm affection for him; and it must be hard indeed, if, among so many good heads, we cannot push one honest fellow happily through the world!

Yours ever,

R. M. KEITH.

It may heighten the good-natured reader's interest in the gallant sailor (so often and fondly mentioned in his brother's correspondence), to give one of the very few characteristic epistles preserved from his pen, written at this precise period of anxiety and loss of employment, and to some, perhaps, of despondence and distress. The writer had just returned from a West Indian station, where he had for some years commanded; and where the liberal and generous conduct, which probably caused his present embarrassment, had endeared him to the island* over which it was his future lot to preside.

ADMIRAL KEITH TO HIS SISTER.

Parliament-street (not the White Bear),
Oct. 14th, 1769.

I received, my dear sister, both your letters, and you would have heard of me ere now, but that I may well liken myself to the attorney in Tom Jones. In short, what with the Admiralty office, Navy ditto, Victualling ditto, Ordnance ditto, &c. &c. &c. &c., I have been so hurried, that I have hardly had eating time; and all this not to get money, but to prevent mulcts, stoppages, &c.

Be persuaded I shall lose no time in this "dirty

* Jamaica, of which he became governor.

metropolis," as your ladyship calls it (pray, do you write your adventures at the White Bear in Piccadilly?). You wanted to see London; you have, and spent your time in the best of company. Your observations on the manners of these polite people must be highly entertaining! *I* have neither money nor inclination to stay among them.

You cannot think how happy I am that father, aunts, sisters, the very *cats* at the Hermitage, are in perfect health and stomach. You must be my ambassadress (for I cannot enter into particulars) with all manner of kind things, in my name, to all my good friends. Kiss my bonny cousins,—men, women, and children,—all that desire it at my hands. I am in very good looks at present, so let them take care of their hearts. A little fat or so, but no matter, this face of mine improves in the wearing; so if it is given me to see four-score, I shall be a perfect beauty, a very comely old gentleman.

Have you any 'sonsy lass with siller' that would take me, eh?—As my poverty increases, my pride keeps pace with it, so that I shall not sell myself cheap. Tell the chits that. Seriously speaking, I don't know any man that has more matrimonial qualities than your *très humble serviteur*. Publish my intentions of honouring with my hand some female properly qualified for that happiness.

Meantime, I 'm a poor half-pay, unshipped man. The Premier at the Admiralty, has said plenty of fine things to a certain lad you know; but the banker won't take that coin. I could weep at parting with my officers, not a bit at being paid-off. The Drummonds are the best of all possible friends; Lady Eliza the sweetest of women. Upon my soul it is not to be conceived the pure and disinterested friendship of that house!

The Hermitage has ever my warmest love and affection. Adieu, dear spinster, and be assured that, whether on whole or half-pay, I am,

Your ever affectionate brother,

Basil Keith.

COLONEL KEITH TO HIS FATHER.

Dresden, Dec. 30th, 1769.

Dear Father,

I rejoice to hear that your visit to the Duke of Athol's was attended with so many agreeable circumstances, and that you are safely returned to your hermits, and now keeping your holidays amongst your many friends, with cheerfulness and comfort. Long be it so, my dear sir, for all our sakes! On Christmas day I was engaged to dine with the Elector, but in the evening we drank your's and Lady Dal's health in my small society, and Frank did the honours of the pies and punch to his fellow-servants, in a very jovial and handsome manner. We are now preparing to plague one another without mercy for three or four days, with visits of ceremony and stiff compliments. I am sure every man of sense should be disgusted with the new year for its nonsensical beginning. But there is no getting the better of custom; and this etiquette is part of the magna charta of all German Courts. The Electress Dowager begins to appear in public again, and her daughter-in-law is declared *enceinte*, to the great joy of the whole country. This will produce fine doings in the end of the carnival, as we expect the Electress Palatine to assist at the lying-in, and perhaps her husband, the Elector, after that ceremony is over. It is not improbable that the Elector of Trèves (who married his nephew), may choose also to christen his

first child, and the young Electress's brother, the Duke of Deuxponts, will make one at the feast. You may easily imagine how much our capital will gain in being thus *Electrified!* Now to my own matters. We had a very wet summer, and no company in town. I have philosophised a good deal, and jaunted about now and then in the neighbourhood. I am almost the only person who loves walking in a country where every step would raise the admiration of a landscape-painter. People are surprised that a man in my situation should trudge about continually (without even a servant), especially as I am, without vanity, so elegantly provided in carriages. Your friend at the Hague has really done wonders in the chariot way; but so far from indulging in laziness in consequence, my long walks are become one of the standing jokes of the Court, and I have proposed to set up a penny post, and to be myself the carrier of all the letters.

Our French players have been discharged, from a very laudable principle of economy; though I am myself a loser by that retrenchment of expense. Our Italian comic Opera *corps* rehearsed this evening for the first time; and I think them much above the common run. *A propos*—I have a very extraordinary commission to give you, which I am afraid you will hardly be able to execute without the help of honest Jock R—— or some such Highland oracle. The Elector has more than once expressed a curiosity to see me in the dress of my quondam corps. I intend to surprise him with it at one of his reviews, in spring. But to be completely in order, I want a handsome *bonnet*, a pair or two of the finest knit *hose*, and a plaid of *my colours*, sewed and plaited on a waist belt. If to this you are so good as to add a *handsome* shoulder-belt and buckle, and the hilt of an *Andrew Ferrara*, I shall be enabled to show my nakedness to the best advantage.

I have, within this month, had an inundation of English, who have nearly eaten me out of house and home. The nine-and-twentieth left me a week ago, and I have only one or two more to expect. I am equally convinced with you, that I am sowing in a thankless soil; but I owe it to the King, and to myself, to bring these gentlemen forward, and to make their stay here as agreeable as I can. I have not yet had the honour of presenting a single female of his Majesty's subjects; but my philosophy is more than proof against that disappointment. Lord Baltimore, with his ladies, will probably take up his residence for the winter. The Duke of Devonshire, with Mr. Fitzherbert, &c., passed ten days here. I endeavoured, by the greatest attention to the Duke, to show my gratitude to General Conway. He is of a very cold disposition; but may turn out a very valuable man. I was glad to see that he was pleased with his reception here. They are most of them gone on to Berlin. A gentleman of that Court, *from whom you gave me copies of three letters*,* has more than once expressed a desire to see me there, which I had some time since intended to communicate to my superiors; but my request for a month's leave I suppressed from the growing troubles in Poland. The invitation was communicated through Lord Marischal, who, on my letter, showed the greatest civilities to Mr. Solicitor Dunning, and Col. Barré; and they owed to him their introduction to the monarch, which had been otherwise refused. His Lordship sent me, by Mr. Dunning, a cornelian, with his own little thin face upon it; I seal this letter with it.

Yours,

R. M. K.

* The King of Prussia. The letters have been already given.

COLONEL KEITH TO HIS SISTER.

Dresden, December 27th, 1769.

I certainly am a good-natured fat gentleman, and the forlorn state of an old bachelor has not yet soured my blood, else I would not accept of the flimsy excuse you make for not answering my letter sooner. What in the name of wonder can a withered Miss have to do half so important as to acknowledge the honour done her by a person *in the ministry?* If you are preparing a petition from Prestonpans * to overturn us, I have nothing to say; I only hope that you will find to yourself a husband amongst the heads of that ancient corporation. The illustrious line of the house of Clapperton, for example, might, with great propriety, light the candle of Hymen; and the alliance of such a high sounding name would add great lustre to the mission with which I am honoured. I can get you made a countess for less money than would buy you a gown; and if you have sense enough to do your part of the business, you shall be Countess of Clapperton by return of post. If you neglect this opening, you are an arrant blockhead, and I give you up.

I must now talk to you of the internal state of my family, which is indeed in a turmoil and combustion, not at all unlike that of a half petitioning borough, though from very different causes. I have in the house twelve men, and three women only. Now the twelve gentlemen are all, more or less, *inamorati* of the three ladies, and have (or think they have) individually reason to be jealous. In the meantime, there are such bicker-

* A little village, not very distant from Lady Dalrymple's (his aunt's) residence.

ings and peltings, that the house is as hot as the fiery furnace. M. Barterman, formerly blacksmith, and now butler, has been so active in dealing out *devoirs* to the females, and fistycuffs to the males, that he is soon to make his parting bow, and the best of his way to Britain. *A propos* of servants, I must tell you an anecdote of Frank, which is not much to his honour. He met with a brother nigger in London who had changed services and countries, with all the light-headedness of his countrymen. He is now in Denmark, and wrote to Squire Francis, with a fine project of lace, and fur, and turban, in Copenhagen. Frank first wavered, and then yielded. He begged my permission to visit the north, which I was in no humour to refuse. He accordingly laid off my sumptuous livery, and rigged himself out for the journey. I gave him an honourable discharge, and he howled a farewell. Next day, an Irish priest called Macnally, (a great friend of Robert More's * at Vienna) came to tell me that his eloquence had awakened the spirit of repentance and regeneration in the black soul of Francis. To be short, he wept a recantation, signed an engagement for three years to come, and received, with his pardon, the handsomest yellow robe in all Saxony. He had set his heart on a Persian robe, and fur lining; and being a very good servant, I could not deny him the satisfaction. Sir Thomas Wyffin, freeholder of the city of Bedford,† is by much the prettiest man, and the most intimate friend I have. *"Venus the God of Love, and Cubid his mother"* are making him look melancholy and gentlemanlike at present; but we shall soon hope to get him into flesh and spirits again. But I have another genius, of quite a different stamp, and this is *his* history.

* Mr. Keith's valet de chambre, while on that embassy.

† Colonel Keith's valet de chambre.

Fifteen years ago, I met at Breda, or Bergen-op-Zoom, a mongrel Scots wine-merchant, of the name of Forbes. He kept a handsome public-house, and was in a fair way of making a fortune, by feeding Dutch subalterns. By some unlucky accident, he became bankrupt, and, in process of time, a lace merchant. He sold his laces to Dutch subalterns, and fortune again frowned upon him. He came to me in London, some years ago, without health or means. I had him set to rights in an hospital, and launched him once more into the world, with good shoes, and a few guineas. I heard no more of my friend Forbes, till I arrived within an hundred yards of the gate of Dresden; when behold, the honest man stopped my coach, and shaking me by the hand, told me he was tired of struggling with fortune, and that he had walked from Holland to give himself over to me for life! His speech admitted of no reply; and here he is, with a handsome suit of blue clothes, and a good wig; and a more decent bailie-looking man never walked the Cross of Edinburgh. He has the run of the house, and a ducat a month; and swears he never saw happier days. I have filled my paper with all this nonsense, but for want of better materials.

Yours most affectionately,

R. M. K.

COL. KEITH TO HARRY DRUMMOND, ESQ.

Dresden, January 3rd, 1770.

My dear Harry,

I wish from my heart that there were no such thing existing as a new year! The devil's in the people, I believe! I have been wished more joy within these three days, than can ever belong to the whole human race; and have tenderly embraced seven

hundred people, men and women, whose faces I hardly know. 'Tis the worst farce that ever was played by human folly; and I love you and your's too well at all times and seasons, to plague you with a long rigmarole, because, forsooth, there are two figures changed in the date of my letter! I am upon the very point of setting out for Berlin *for a fortnight*, to see Sir Andrew Mitchell,* and Lord Marischal, who have long pressed me to make this journey. There are objects enough of curiosity in that great capital; but for my sins, there are no less than seven different Courts there, at all of which poor Keith must be presented, and take leave, in the space of ten days! It is a wise saying that one half of the world does not know how the other lives; and while you are getting money at the *Gang*, you little guess what I suffer in being bound 'prentice to Sir Clement Cotterell.

I suppose about this time all you Drummonds, Campbells, and wives and brats, are gathered together and stuffing your insides with chine and turkey. Oh if I could come among you, only for four-and-twenty hours, I think I could do a deal of business. I must whisper in your ear that I am the delight of all the Saxon dear creatures; and if I did not wax a *little* corpulent, I should be the prettiest fellow in the Holy Roman Empire.

COLONEL KEITH TO HIS SISTER.

Dresden, February 25th, 1770.

DEAR ANNE,

My late journey to Berlin† was the only occasion of my delaying so long to answer Basil's letters: he has ere now got my full sheet, and I know

* The British minister, his father's friend and correspondent.

† The visit alluded to, to Earl Marischal, at the desire of the King of Prussia.

he will do justice to my friendship and affection for him. You would give two of your teeth for a minute account of all I saw and heard and did at Berlin; but ministers should never unbosom themselves to Misses, and so you must rest contented. The man who hangs at the side of your parlour-fire,* is younger, handsomer, and livelier by far, than I had figured to myself. His conversation is keen and interesting, and his looks agreeable, when he is in a good humour. He said many kind things about the old hermit, and made it public *to the whole town* that he owed an essential obligation to that gentleman. Since my return here, Lord Marischal† has conveyed to me an invitation from him to make a second visit; but that must depend on circumstances, and cannot take place at least for some time.

His houses, shows, and streets are magnificent; but the new country-house‡ is a perfect *unique*. From the entrance to the garrets nothing is to be seen but gold and silver stuffs, inlaid floors, marquetterie, porphyry, and rock-crystal! Without, triumphal arches and colonnades, that beggar all description—at least such description as my time will permit me to bestow upon you at present. If we had a winter to pass together at Kilspindie, or some such castle, I have chat for you that would beguile the time most pleasantly. If Aunt Dal§ will repair an apartment at Tantallon,‖ I will retire with her there, and narrate without ceasing.

* The Great Frederick, whose correspondence with Mr. Keith has been given.

† Earl Marischal, the friend of Frederick, and brother to the great Marshal Keith.

‡ The palace of Potzdam.

§ Lady Dalrymple, widow of Sir R. Dalrymple, of North Berwick twin sister to the writer's mother.

‖ An ancient fortress overhanging the Frith of Forth, near the Bass Rock, both the property of the Dalrymple family.

My stay of three days with Lord Marischal was productive of no very material consequences; yet I had good reason to believe that I enjoyed both his good opinion and his confidence. He is the most innocent of God's creatures; and his heart is much warmer than his head. The place of his abode is the very temple of dullness, and his female companion is perfectly calculated to be the priestess of it. He finds, notwithstanding, an hundred little occupations, which fill up the four-and-twenty hours, in a manner to him not unpleasing; and I really am persuaded he has a conscience that would gild the inside of a dungeon. The history of the feats performed by the bare-legged warriors* in the late war, accompanied by a *pibroch*† in his outer room, have an effect upon the old Don that would delight you. If there is a perfect Whig upon principle to be met with, he is the man—and from conviction so. I am charged with all manner of kind things from him to the Hermitage.

I rejoice that Mary B—— has got a lover worthy of her. Tell her from me, that if she gets over head and ears herself, it will make her a better woman, and a tenderer friend, to the end of her life. *Experto crede Roberto.* There's Latin for you! The last letter I had from Lady —— seemed to prognosticate marriage for Ernestine and others of the family; but I am become a sceptic on that head, and believe nothing till hands are tied. Say something to me on that article, and pray avoid mystery, which is no where in its place, except in Holy Writ. The princes of the Empire shall know nothing of what passes in Fife, unless what you choose to have made public.

* The Highland Regiments (already mentioned) in Germany.

† A march on the bagpipes.

My family is torn to pieces by the contending devils of matrimony and jealousy. The last I have already expatiated on; and it would puzzle the wise Solomon himself to settle that controversy. But my bankrupt Forbes, though aged, diseased, and a sot, has found out a Saxon Statira, who will marry him, in spite of common sense, and your brother. Nothing but some very ugly story to patch up, could make this nymph of six-and-twenty take this step, the consequence of which will be that I shall be a bankrupt out of pocket. Frank behaves like an angel since he got his fine coat and feathers; he eats in my house, and, like all the rest of them, he eats the bread of idleness. I have a running footman who has not yet the honour of your acquaintance, but as I have a notion that he may soon run away from me, I shall say little concerning him. I have a housekeeper, who is the very pattern of prudence and purity, as I hear, for I never saw the lady but once, at a distance, during the five months she has been under my roof. N.B. She has no lover that I know of.

If we did not eat most unmercifully our town would be very agreeable. The mother of the Sovereign is the most sociable and easy lady of her rank in Christendom. We shall have routs, riots, and fandangos for six or seven weeks of the carnival. I dare not hint to you what a pretty part I play in all this, but to be sure *" le Ministre D'Angleterre est un homme charmant !"*

Yours ever,

R. M. K.

COLONEL KEITH TO MR. KEITH.

Dresden, March 18th, 1770.

DEAR FATHER,

I have, for these three weeks past, been tormented with all the plagues of Egypt, in the shape

of catarrh, megrim, ear-ache, and toothache. I have fought a stout battle, and attacked them with every weapon, from rhubarb up to bark and a blister. My victory is not yet complete, but I hope in a few days to be essentially master of the field. The end of the carnival was the occasion of the mischief; for we danced incessantly, and had hourly opportunities of catching cold. I have been in the hands of a Dr. Bailies, who claims acquantance with Sir Alexander Dick, from whom he expects a friendly interposition with Sir John Pringle, to procure him a recommendation to Dr. Van Swieten, at Vienna, where he intended to practise inoculation, but has been *refused leave*. The doctor is, I believe, very able in his profession; and as he took his first degrees in Edinburgh, and is well known to my uncle, I shall be glad if he assists him with Sir John. So much for medicine and its professors.

Prudence does not permit me to be as explicit as I could wish with regard to your correspondent,* to whom I paid a visit lately. He was at great pains, even before my introduction, to declare publicly how much he thought himself obliged to you; and the reception I met was looked upon by those who knew him best, as more than commonly gracious. There was a moment and a message, which seemed to prognosticate a mark of favour and remembrance; and Sir Andrew† was strongly of that opinion; however, as I expected, it came in the end to nothing. I believe I told you that Lord Marischal has conveyed to me, since my return, a very gracious invitation to a second visit, which may possibly take place in the end of

* Frederick the Great, King of Prussia.

† The minister before mentioned, who resided forty years in Berlin.

autumn. He mentioned you again upon this occasion, in very distinguished terms; and I know that he said very obliging things of your son, to a *great lady* here, with whom he keeps up a familiar correspondence. All this is perfectly in his style, but however honourable, I am weaned from the hope of its being any way advantageous to my fortune.

Lord Marischal came to meet me at Sir Andrew's, where we passed five days together. My visit to his country residence was of three days; and I had reason to be convinced that it gave the old Don great pleasure. He talked to me with the greatest openness and confidence of all the material incidents of his life; and hinted often that the honour of the clan was now to be supported by our family, for all of whom he had the greatest esteem.*

His taste, his ideas, and his manner of living, are a mixture of Aberdeenshire and the kingdom of Valencia; and as he seeks to make no new friends, he seems to retain a strong, though silent, attachment for his old ones. As to his political principles, I believe him the most sincere of all converts.† I told you of the present

* One brief but emphatic testimony, under the venerable chief's hand, to this effect, has been already given. Another, equally pithy, written some years later, in characters bespeaking increased infirmity, runs thus :—

"Lord Marischal to Sir R. Keith, on his Father's death.

"*Potzdam*, 15*th Oct.*, 1774.

"I am very sorry, good Sir, for your late loss. I have known three generations of your family, and three successive of so worthy men I *know nowhere to be found*. I hope, Sir Basil shall soon give a fourth. I continue without pain, but very weak; if I hold out this winter it will be much.

"Ever faithfully yours,

"M."

† It is affirmed (says Adolphus) that Keith, Earl Marischal, who not long before had been in Spain, and who, at the intercession of the King of Prussia, had been restored to his property in Scotland, communicated,

of the family seals, most of them trifling baubles; and a small manuscript,* containing some curious anecdotes relating to himself and the people he had unfortunately been engaged with. He never mentioned his private affairs, nor his intentions in futurity, but I have reason to believe that when his stupid companion has had her share—and that a considerable one—the remainder will be very properly disposed of to the Elphinstones. I correspond very regularly with him, and he has even given me hopes of his passing a few days with me here in summer. I thank you for the lights you give me with regard to the other journey,† which I have very much at heart; but the state of public affairs will probably not allow me to think of it for some time. I should be wanting to you and to myself, if I did not bestow all possible attention on the business I am entrusted with; and it has hitherto been amply repaid by the repeated approbation of my superiors.

Since I began this, I have had a most inimitable letter from Lord Marischal. I had mentioned Dr. Bailies to him, and begged he would send me a state of his case and infirmities, that the doctor might prescribe for him. This is a part of his answer:—"I thank you for your advice of consulting the English doctor, to repair my old carcase. I have lately done so by my old coach, and it is now almost as good as new. Please therefore to tell the doctor, that from him I expect a good repair, and shall state the case. First, he must know that the machine is the worse for wear, being near eighty years old. The reparation I

in gratitude, the intelligence of the remarkable treaty, called the "Family Compact," to Mr. Pitt.

* This MS. has, unfortunately, not been recovered.

† A visit, afterwards most happily accomplished, to his father's old friends at Vienna.

propose he shall begin with is: one pair of new eyes, one pair of new ears, some improvement on the memory. When this is done, we shall ask new legs, and some change in the stomach. For the present, this first reparation will be sufficient; and we must not trouble the doctor too much at once." You see by this, how easy his Lordship's infirmities sit upon him; and it is really so as he says. Your friend Sir Andrew is, I am afraid, less gay; but I have not heard from him these three months. I have been impatient, for several weeks, to know the decision of the Spanish story; but am still as much in the dark as ever. The admiral is a very warm friend, but a sad correspondent; and I have heard from him only once since he arrived in the capital. I forgive him if his activity is properly employed to ensure success. No assistance on my part, or that of my friends, shall be wanting. Adieu, dear sir! Health and happiness attend you and the Hermits.

R. M. K.

George Keith, ninth Earl Marischal, and brother to the celebrated Marshal Keith, attainted for the part he took in the Rebellion of 1715, and obliged to leave his native country, had for many years resided at Berlin, honoured with the intimate friendship and confidence of the Great Frederick. It may be interesting to those who have read of his amiable qualities, and cheerful playfulness under the infirmities of age, to contrast, or rather, connect the picture, with a description of him at an earlier and a very different period; drawn by the piquant pen of his contemporary and quondam flame, the Maréchale de Créqui, who survived him many years, and died at near a hundred, subsequently to the French Revolution.

"Milord Maréchal," says the lively narratress (writing for the amusement of her grandchildren, with the vivacity for which in earlier life she had been so universally admired), "why should I not speak to you of Milord Maréchal? since every one who tells you of the affection with which he inspired me, will also be obliged to allow that we conducted ourselves with perfect propriety towards each other.

"Milord Maréchal (I shall never be able to write that name without emotion!) was, when I first saw him at my uncle's, a handsome Scotchman, twenty-four years of age, intelligent, sensible, and grave. He came from England, on a mission from the English Jacobites to the refugees; and he had political audiences at the Hotel de Breteuil, where he used to meet his uncles, the Dukes of Perth and Melfort.

"If you wish to have an idea of his personal appearance, you must look at that charming portrait of the handsome Caylus, the favourite of Henry the Third, which you inherited from the Constable de Lesdiguières; to whom, be it added, it was presented by the Queen, having been forgotten by the King in his oratory.

"The young lord fell in love with your grandmother, then a young girl, and not devoid (according to some people), of attractions. We began by looking at one another; first with curiosity, then with interest, and at last with emotion. Next we used to listen to the conversation of each other, without being able to answer a word, and then neither could speak at all, in the presence of the other, owing to our voices at first trembling, and then failing us altogether. So, to make a long story short, he one day said to me *à propos to nothing*, 'If I dared to fall in love with you would you ever forgive me?'

"'I should be enchanted,' said I; and we relapsed

into our usual formal silence; bestowing as many looks as we could upon each other, and our eyes beaming with silent happiness. In this manner did we spend six weeks or two months. My aunt permitted him to give me some lessons in Spanish, not English, for, in fact, at that time, no one thought of learning English, or any other northern language. Milord George spoke Spanish and Italian quite as well as French; that is to say, perfectly.

"He came once, and sat upon a bench behind mine (for a young lady in my days never was installed in a chair with a back, much less an arm-chair). He related to me, with great glee, the adventures of some Dutch heiress who had eloped with an English Orangeman, and whose parents had put in the London papers that if she would not return, at least to send back the key of the tea-caddy which she had carried away. This set me off laughing, and my cousin Emilie, who was always present at our lessons, and apt to fancy we were making game of her, uttered some remarks. This decided the young lord to make a proposal of marriage for me; which was immediately submitted to my father, my grandfather, and my aunt de Breteuil—the coward! who shrieked at the idea, because the Maréchal of Scotland must be a Protestant.

"I had never thought of that! The discovery burst upon me so suddenly, and so grievously, that I cannot, even now, dwell upon it without shuddering, and without having a bitter recollection of what I suffered. We ascertained, however, that he was a Calvinist, and he said so himself; and, Heaven is my witness that, from that moment, I did not hesitate. I refused the hand of Milord Maréchal, and two days afterwards he set out to return to his own country; from whence he wrote to say that grief and despair would lead him to

acts that might bring him to the scaffold. There, my child, is the history of the only predilection I ever had in my life for any one except Monsieur de Créqui; to whom I was honest enough to talk of it without reserve.

"When we met again, after the lapse of many years, we made a discovery which equally surprised and affected us both. There is a world of difference between the love which had endured throughout a lifetime, and that which has burned fiercely in our youth, and there paused. In the latter case, time has not laid bare defects, nor taught the bitter lesson of mutual failings; a delusion has subsisted on both sides which experience has not destroyed; and delighting in the idea of each other's perfections, that thought has seemed to smile on both with unspeakable sweetness, till, when we meet, in a grey old age, feelings so tender, so pure, so solemn, arise, that they can be compared to no other sentiments or impressions of which our nature is capable.

"The visit of the Maréchal of Scotland took place in the presence of Madame de Nevers; and it moved her to the depths of her soul. You were then born, my dear grandson! and the Maréchal was seventy years of age. 'Listen,' said he, 'listen to the only French verses I ever composed, and perhaps the only reproaches that ever were addressed to you:—

"'Un trait, lancé par caprice,
M'atteignit dans mon printems:
J'en porte la cicatrice
Encore, sous mes cheveux blancs.
Craignez les maux qu'amour cause,
Et plaignez un insensé
Qui n'a point cueilli la rose,
Et que l'épine a blessé.'"

COLONEL KEITH TO HIS SISTER.

Dresden, Feb. 25th, 1770.

Dear Anne,

I do not see any human possibility of filling this huge sheet even with all the nonsense that a Keith can collect; but it shows a good intention to write by the square acre, and so here goes—the Lord knows what. I always knew the Duchess of Gordon to be one of the most bewitching creatures alive, and if she struck the Keiths dumb, she may brag of it to her dying day. I am a little puzzled at a chronological error in your account of the joyful dinner at Lady Dumfries's; since I have the Caledonian Mercury's authority for supposing, that, on that very day, her Grace was busy in bringing into the world a son and heir! If she performed that feat at table, and continued to entertain you all the while, I have nothing more to say; and truly, if any lady in Europe is capable of introducing this new fashion, I firmly believe it to be her Grace. Lay me at her feet and leave me there. I think Lord William's adventure has ended unromantically.

A propos of adventures. In a company of dear creatures, to-day, we had a French newspaper, containing a most dismal story of a young gentleman, who, after a variety of beautiful obstacles, and formidable rivals, had at last obtained the hand and heart of his Dulcinea. On the wedding-day, a joyful company dined, danced, and supped; and the loving couple, having retired about midnight, the guests determined to dance till breakfast next morning. So said, so done; and at nine o'clock the dancers went in a body towards the door of the nuptial chamber, to hail the happy pair. Upon approaching, lamentable cries were heard; the door was burst open, and the young and lovely bride

was found bathing with tears the dead body of her bridegroom, who must have expired some hours before, as he was already cold. The most pathetic grief ensued; the lady was torn from the chamber in all the agonies of despair, and unable to give any account of the disaster. A fever and frenzy followed next day, and she died within eight-and-forty hours, without ever recovering her senses. *Buried together*, as you may believe. The story is well, and affectingly told in the newspaper: it is said to have happened recently, and the scene is laid in Edinburgh! Now, Miss, my dear creatures insist, that I shall (through your means), dive to the bottom of this mystery, and report accordingly. So much for that. N.B.—No marks of violence on the dead husband. Foul play from a rival suspected by the newswriter. *I* swear that there never was a man or maid, *poisoned* in Caledonia. I foresee your answer. 'Tis all a fiction!*

After a tragedy comes a farce; I'll tell you a story. You must know, that we have more pages here than any court in Christendom; all pickles! One of these little gentry, during the last fair, stood for a considerable time at a booth where toys were sold by an ill-natured old woman. His looks spoke desire, his cloth forbade credit; and the beldame told him peevishly not to take up the room of one who *might* become a buyer. The page observed that the lady had, upon a shelf in her booth, a pitcher filled with cream, and, as all pages have packthread in their pockets, he slily fixed one end of his clue to the handle of the pitcher and retired grumbling, to a private corner at some distance. There

* The most natural solution which at this distance of time can occur is, that the French editor had got hold of, and revived, a distorted version of the "Bride of Lammermoor," actually communicated to Sir Walter Scott by the writer's sister.

he sat *perdue*, with his packthread in his hand, watching the moment when he could tumble down the pitcher upon the old woman's head.

At the instant, the *Gouverneur des Pages*, a grave, sententious, *leaden* man, came that way, and seeing little pickle in the corner, he wisely smelt a rat. "What are you doing, you little dog?" "Nothing." "I suspect you have been pilfering; show me your hands." Behold the packthread, which the governor immediately seized. Supposing some stolen goods at the end, he pulled, and pulled; the nimble page took to his heels; down came the pitcher; out screamed the beldame, and she and twenty of her neighbours, fell with tongue and nail upon old gravity; who, being caught in the very fact, was scratched and hooted out of the fair, without the possibility of making a defence. If you knew the proud old fool of a governor, you would kiss the little page for his cunning!

My patience is worn to the stumps, and I am more than half inclined to be peevish. Imagine to yourself, that, in this critical moment, there are no less than five mails due from England! I am teazed to death with all the idle and contradictory news which the under-strappers in politics invent, and retail us every day; and my only defence is pleading, *ignoramus*. To a man of my impatience and importance, this is a situation which would lead one half of my countrymen to a *halter*; but I am too poor a man to take so noble a revenge of myself for the obstinacy of an easterly wind.

As to public festivities, we have them of all colours. Four masquerades, and two court balls per week. Dinners and suppers by scores, and little operas, &c. I wax old or lazy, for I own that it is a sort of relief to me to think that Sunday next ends the carnival. You shall have a longer and better letter during Lent. This

thing of shreds and patches, you are to look upon only as a ram-race of nonsense, as I can fairly say I never looked either behind or before me, since I started. I performed this sheet in about half an hour, which is no bad travelling in such roads. My kind regards to Mrs. W——, and her *ancient*, who shall be promoted. Love to Lady Die, and her husband; the Abbey-hill, the Castle-hill, and the Cross; with Crawfords, Chalmers, Berrys, and Browns. Tell Dolly Dundas that I was so much in love with her one day, that I kissed the door of her house, in returning home from dinner. This declaration comes rather late, but no help for it! The Hermits know my love and duty; and if they don't think this a pretty piece of prose, I have lost my labour, which, indeed, was only that of the fingers. I will not turn over, that's flat!

Yours ever,

R. M. K.

SIR R. M. KEITH TO H. DRUMMOND, ESQ.

Dresden, April 7th, 1771.

My dear Harry,

In writing to one of the *Gang*, I write to them all; and I have the strongest proofs of the activity with which they espouse the interest of an absent friend. The Lord-Registrar has told me what your feelings were upon my *removal;** and a letter I wrote to him the moment I was made acquainted with it, will have shown you the impression it made upon me. The sum total of the matter is, my dear Harry, that the King may command my services to the utmost verge of the globe;

* To the more honourable, but, at that time, peculiarly delicate mission at the Court of Denmark; which, (like other circumstances at the time unwelcome,) ultimately raised to fame and fortune the unwilling Envoy.

but I can never suppose that so gracious a master, or any of his confidential servants, can, in return for services which they are pleased to approve, lessen all the comforts of my life, and at the same time add greatly to my expense, without increasing my income. This is a plain *matter of fact*, which needs only to be understood to be redressed; and I have almost a certainty, that if the Duke of Gloucester is pleased to grant me his protection, my claim can meet with no opposition. The House will be glad to do a friendly thing by me, and then all will undoubtedly go well. You cannot imagine how much I am obliged to Mr. Conway's friendship upon this occasion; and I am sure that his representation will add weight to the request I have made for additional rank and emolument. You know I am not interested; but in the change of my housekeeping, and the necessity of buying a service of plate, I must be attentive to my affairs, in order to be just. I have been ten times tempted to ask leave to go home for a month or two; but the fear of being thought negligent in the King's affairs, and still more the cruel temper of the times, prevent me. I would not add to the *embarras* of the King's servants; I would not be the carrier of a complaint, or wear a face of discontent at present, no, not for an empire! The King's service shall be carried on to the best of my abilities, and a time may come when I may be thought to deserve a reward.

My dear Harry, there is one comfortable feeling, which not even the cold climate of Denmark can damp; and that is the grateful sense of favours bestowed by men whom I love and esteem above all others. The satisfaction which arises from this reflection, is not only agreeable, but necessary, to a man who is probably to pass a great part of his life in honourable banishment.

I am very willing to exert my utmost powers for the King's service in Denmark; but it is not to be expected that I should wish to make a long stay in that most comfortless country.

Poor Basil! I must prevail upon the King of Denmark to make him governor of one of his thousand islands!* Keep the honest fellow in good spirits, and tell him that I shall write to him in a post or two. Adieu, my dear Harry. Love to sweet Bess, and her brats, and all the clan. I am your's from the bottom of my heart.

R. M. Keith.

The regret with which the writer of the above letter exchanged the ease, freedom, and social advantages of a small, but pleasant Court, for the anticipated stiffness and not unforeseen difficulties, of one where disunion, faction, and feuds more formidable still, were known to prevail—are very evident. He bade adieu reluctantly to the Elector and his mother (already mentioned as the "most sociable and easy lady of her rank in Europe"), the former of whom, shortly after, testified his esteem for the minister by a magnificent present of china, the first service he had ever given; while the latter, in addition to a gift (*non*-ministerial, for she never gave such) of a snuff-box with her picture, continued during his stay in Denmark his "weekly correspondent, on as easy a footing," says he, "as my sister Anne."

Colonel Keith gladly availed himself of the few weeks which elapsed between his quitting Saxony and entering on his functions in Denmark, to accomplish the visit to Vienna, to pay his respects to the Imperial family, and

* A curious prediction for one who, by going to Denmark, made him governor of Jamaica.

become acquainted with his father's numerous friends there, to which he had been urged by Mr. Keith; and which, as we have seen, a sense of public duty had alone prevented his requesting permission for sooner. If anything could have consoled the reluctant Envoy, for his Hyperborean destination, or paved the way, unconsciously, for his future domestication in the very capital which now so kindly opened its arms to his "father's son," it would have been the reception described in the following letter:—

COLONEL KEITH TO HIS FATHER.

Dresden, May 3rd, 1771.

Dear Father,

I sit down, in the *first moment* of my leisure, to give you the most satisfactory account in my power of every material occurrence of my agreeable journey to Vienna. The annexed journal will let you see the dates, and I mean to talk to you of your friends, each in their turn.

From the very distinguished reception I met with from the Empress and Emperor,* I may be permitted to place these illustrious persons at the head of my list. Her Imperial Majesty mentioned, with great pleasure, your good services to the King, your attachment for her, and the probity and zeal which distinguished your mission. She said (laughing), that she had more than once had political quarrels with you, but that she always attributed your warmth to the best motives; and that a difference of opinion had never altered her esteem. She took Lord Stormont† to witness that she had repeatedly inquired of him after your situation and

* Maria Theresa and her son, Joseph II.

† Then her Majesty's minister at Vienna.

health. That she had given commissions formerly to Seilern, and lately to Belgioioso, to let you know how much she interested herself in your welfare. She asked me particularly after your children—your manner of life, and settlement. I told her Majesty that I had long hoped to have been presented to her by you; but that a late indisposition, and my change of mission, had prevented what I was sure would have afforded you the greatest pleasure. The Empress expressed herself obliged to you for your intention, and ordered me to say every thing to you in her name which could convince you of her invariable esteem. She found a resemblance between you and me, and was struck with the similitude of our voices. I was surprised, I own, at the change in her Majesty's figure and features from all her pictures; and sorry to see that her health was far from being good, as she looked pursy and short-breathed, and has, I am told, swellings in her limbs, as well as one arm. The Emperor* said he remembered you perfectly; your person, your conduct, and the general approbation they met with; was already informed of your style of life, and was pleased that your retreat was so agreeable; mentioned with great clearness and judgment the Court of Dresden, and that I am now accredited to—a great many truths, but represented with all the good-nature possible. He commanded me to assure you of his good wishes, and ended by saying that as *he* could not foresee a journey so far into the north, as my future residence, he must expect to see me again in his dominions, as he wished to see *your son more than once.*† I saw the Emperor in town

* The son of Maria Theresa, Joseph the Second.

† This flattering expression, so unexpectedly realised by Sir R. M Keith presenting his credentials as British Minister to Vienna within little more than a year, was then proved to have been perfectly sincere.

every day during my stay; and cannot say enough of his easy and condescending manner. Dietrichstein and Rosenberg behaved as you could have expected; especially the first, who gave me several letters for Denmark, and amused the Emperor by offering to accompany me thither.

"The Archdukes Ferdinand and Maximilian, with the eldest Archduchess, and Elizabeth, were together at my being presented. They were all very gracious, but particularly the eldest Archduchess, who claimed aloud the privilege of being amongst your best friends. I told her Royal Highness that I had always known you grateful for her singular goodness to you. The audiences were shortened by the dining hour; as those of their Imperial Majesties had been longer than usual. So much for the Court.

"Prince Kaunitz's reception of me was extremely civil. After many questions about my journey, and destination, he ended the conversation by saying that you had always honoured him with your friendship; that he felt that sentiment was continued on his part, and should be happy if it were hereditary on mine; bid me see him often and judge of his sincerity. The second time I saw him he was indisposed, peevish, and spoke little: but the day we dined together at Stormont's he filled out a bumper, and made all the company drink to his worthy and amiable friend, Old Keith, to which he added many other handsome things. When I took leave, he said, "I beg you to remember me with affection to your father, and hope you will look upon Vienna as a place to which (with emphasis) you will *always be most welcome.*"* I must not omit that the Empress,

* This also, it will be seen, found full realization, in a degree of courtesy and deference towards the writer, very unusual in that haughty minister.

and afterwards Kaunitz, took opportunities of expressing in my hearing, their high esteem for Lord Stormont, which indeed cannot be better founded.

"Prince Colloredo received me perfectly, and regretted that as he and his family were to set out for Baden next day, he could not have an opportunity of making his house agreeable to the son of a man whom he esteemed and loved. He invited me to Baden, where I had not time to go. Every person in the Colloredo family took an interest in me, and Baron Hagen, whom I met there, was cordiality itself.

"I must tell you a little anecdote which gave me real pleasure, and took prodigiously at Vienna. The second day of my being there, I was strolling about the streets, and stopped, with a spy-glass in my hand, at the front of the Colloredo, and Chancery buildings. While I looked up at the statues, an old servant (porter to Prince Colloredo), knew me at once, and, stepping forward, with the kindest familiarity, and slapping me on the shoulder, said in German—Precisely what your dear papa used to do twenty years ago! Nothing could be more benevolent than the look with which he accompanied this, and I own I was struck with it. I mentioned the agreeable sensation it had given me, in the company where I passed the evening, and next day I found the porter and I had been in the mouths of all Vienna. It is, in my opinion, no bad sign of the people of a great capital, who expressed themselves pleased with so simple an incident as this! Nothing could be kinder than the whole Harrach family,* and indeed they vied with each other, to the last moment, in every mark of attention.

* It will be remembered, that a slight, though unfounded, suspicion of a lack of reciprocal kindness of *expression*, on his son's part, towards this family, employed his father's thoughts in his last illness.

Ferdinand and Madame live splendidly at their garden; and Ernest with his family most comfortably. Count Firmian deserves a separate sheet for his own share. In my life I never saw a man of so winning an address, from the plain unaffected character which his first look promises. His friendship for you is of the most genuine kind, and his expression of it most persuasive. He made me promise to see him at Milan, and insisted upon my assuring you that he never could forget the obligation *he had to your salutary advice.* I was glad to see the high opinion, both of the Court and public, for Count Firmian: and I heartily wish that the Archduke Ferdinand may do justice to his merit, and contribute to the ease and happiness of his life. Baron Hagen, with whom I saw the Count almost every day, seemed equally your friend; and recapitulated with pleasure the many happy days you had passed together. The Princess Esterhazy, and your German Lubomirska, were *more* than civil to me, each in their different way. Polite and kind inquiries, on the one hand, and the most vulgar warm-heartedness on the other: but both meaning the same thing. Prince Francis Lichtenstein, and his lady, sent to me, from the first, to bespeak a day. I had a noble dinner at their house, where all the persons I knew intimately were invited. I have mentioned in my journal Madame D'Uhlefeld,* than whom I never saw a more respectable woman. Her daughters, Madame de *Thun*,† and Wallenstein, live entirely in Lord Stormont's *coterie*, and are certainly among the most agreeable women in Vienna."

* Widow of a former Chancellor of the Empire, the predecessor of Prince Kaunitz.

† This lady became, with an equally amiable Madame de Pergen, the chosen friend of Sir M. Keith, round whom all Lord Stormont's *coterie* immediately congregated.

A second trip to Berlin had, as we have seen, formed a favourite project of Colonel Keith's; and the same opportunity was seized to accomplish it, both his venerable kinsman, and the monarch who had suggested the visit, being in a state of health which seemed to prognosticate that it would be a final one. Its results are thus given, in a letter to Mr. Keith:—

"My good Lord Marischal seemed mightily glad to see me at Potzdam. He is grown twice as thin and tottering as when you saw him; but says, with great good humour, that he feels all the springs of the machine wearing out with an equal pace, and that he hopes, when it falls to pieces, it will be without much pain or preparation. He seemed much pleased with the Elphinstones, to whom he has lately given the little ready money he had: and told me he had given Mr. Keith a good purchase of Dunottar, as a reward for the attachment of his family. Your correspondent * sent his coach for me, and said, in an hour's *tête-à-tête* conversation, more flattering and well-turned things than would fill a quire of paper. His questions were so particular and minute, that it would have surprised you. My answer to his inquiry '*Si vous étiez sur vos Terres?*' diverted him much. I told him, '*Que pour des Terres, vous n'en possédiez pas la grandeur de sa chambre; et que cependant il y avait très peu de gens plus heureux que vous, et vôtre famille.*' I could see that poverty had never presented itself in so fair an aspect to him as at that moment. He repeated several times his wish to have had Murrays Hall† attached (by order of his superiors) to his person, and added, that if the people concerned had

* Frederick the Great.

† Colonel Keith himself, thus named, *more Scottico*, from his estate.

given him time, he would have made his wishes known to them. He hoped another opportunity would offer, and said he should never lose sight of the obligations he owed to a certain clan. He recapitulated several of these good services, beginning with those of the late Marshal Keith, and finishing with those which came nearer home to me. In short, all was more than civil; and a time may come when some advantage may arise from a partiality to the Tweeddale laird, which is the natural consequence. The same language is uniformly held by him in public, as I have ample proofs, and on a variety of occasions. Your correspondent's *heir-at-law* * and his lady, made use of almost the same expressions, with the head of the family, in mentioning you and yours. I dare hardly flatter myself with the hope of seeing Lord Marischal again, though I wish it much, from the real affection I bear him.

"The day after my return to Dresden, the Electress Dowager set out for Aix-la-Chapelle. Her goodness to me had been uniform, and, as a last proof of it, she gave me a very handsome snuff-box of Saxon stones with her picture. This is no common favour, for since her widowhood she makes no presents to ministers. I told you that the Elector had ordered me a magnificent service of china (the first he has given), but I could not then mention the very honourable testimony he conveys to the King in some expressions in his letter, which of course gives me much satisfaction. The manner in which this first attempt in my present walk has been received, gives me encouragement for the future. The intimacy which I had contracted with several

* The Crown Prince and Princess of Prussia. Somewhat of the flattering confidence in Sir R. M. Keith, manifested by the former when Sovereign (during the memorable Congress of Sistovo), may have had this hereditary source.

very amiable people at Dresden, makes me feel a great deal in parting from them: but Saxony is so centrical, that I may flatter myself with revisiting it more than once.

"Lord Marischal has agreed to my erecting a decent gravestone to the memory of his late brother,* and in the place where he fell. They sent me two inscriptions, but they were long and languid. I have engaged Baron Hagen and his friend old *Metastasio* to touch me up something manly and *energetic*, and in the course of this summer, my tribute of veneration for the memory of a brave and honest man will be recorded on monumental marble.† I need not tell you that upon that marble there will be no more mention of me than of the *man in the moon*."

One more extract from Colonel Keith's Journal, containing his first impressions of Copenhagen, will

* Inscription on the Monument at Hochkirchen, erected by his relation Sir R. Murray Keith, to the memory of Marshal Keith :—

JACOBO KEITH
Gulielmi Comitis Marescelli Hered.
Regni Scotiæ,
Et Mariæ Drummond, Filio,
Frederici Borussorum Regis
Summo Exercitûs Præfecto,
Viro
Antiquis moribus et militari virtute claro,
Qui
Dum in prælio non procul hinc
Inclinatum suorum aciem
Marte, manu, voce, et exemplo
Restituebat
Pugnans ut Heroas decet
Occubuit
Anno 1758. Mense Oct. 1.

† A noble monument at Berlin was afterwards erected by the King of Prussia.

serve to pave the way for the more detailed account of Queen Carolina Matilda, and of other persons and occurrences in that most important scene of his diplomatic labours which originally formed the sole object of the present publication; but which it is hoped may derive enhanced interest from the previous insight acquired by the reader into the character and feelings of its hero.

"Copenhagen" writes Colonel Keith to his father, "is by far a finer city than I had figured to myself, or had a right to expect, from the other Danish towns I had seen upon the road. The streets are broad, the openings and squares spacious, and the palace, as well as several of the public buildings, magnificent. The street in which my house stands, leads to the new square, which is composed of *palaces*, built uniformly, and embellished by the famous equestrian statue of the late King; which is, in all probability, the finest in Europe. It is perfectly finished, but not yet uncovered; and you will hardly believe that the statue, and its ornaments alone, could have cost one hundred and twenty thousand pounds, which I am assured is true. I have hired Mr. Gunning's house, and the impossibility of finding a furnished one here made it *absolutely necessary* for me to purchase his furniture, for which I paid him, two days ago, five hundred and twelve pounds! From this one ruinous article, you may judge of the rest; and of the fair claim I had to additional emolument, upon being nominated to this commission, which it never entered into my brain to solicit. Climate, comfort, society, *all against me*—the ruin of my fortune into the bargain would be too hard.

"My first audiences are over, and now my business must be to deserve the public and private esteem; and then I shall be prepared for whatever circumstances occur. One of great moment, and for which we are daily looking, is the Queen's confinement, which has already passed its allotted period.*

* Of her second child, a daughter, Princess of Holstein Augustenburg, and mother to the late Queen of Denmark.

MEMOIRS OF

CAROLINA MATILDA, QUEEN OF DENMARK.*

INTRODUCTION.

It is seldom that the three-act drama of human life, with its morning of bright hopes, its busy checkered noon, and evening of faded joys, and deepening clouds, is played out, and with a tragic consummation, ere the chief actor in it has numbered four-and-twenty years. But such has been (perhaps to "point a moral," if not to "adorn a tale") the not unfrequent fate of female royalty. And if, at that early period, the grave opened literally its sheltering arms to the subject of the following memoir, the gates of a neighbouring fortress had closed, scarcely less effectually, at the same age, on her injured great grandmother, Sophia Dorothea, consort of George I.

Nor did an earlier occupant of one of the British thrones, our own Mary Stuart, bid a less final "farewell," not only to "all her greatness," but to every joy of life and freedom, when crossing the threshold of her first English prison, than when, twenty years later, the

* Sister of King George III., and wife of Christian VII. of Denmark.

pall descended on her headless corpse in the hall of Fotheringay!

The parallel does not end here. All three were endowed (fatally, perhaps, for them as sovereigns) with the perilous gift of beauty, and with talents only calculated to deepen the feeling of contempt for brutal partners whose indifference, cruelty, and indignities, palliate, though they may fail to justify, the alienation which was their natural consequence. Over the guilt, too, or innocence of these three lovely princesses, there hangs (though with widely varying intensity of shade) a cloud of impenetrable mystery; nor will posterity probably ever precisely agree as to the degree in which their avowed and unquestionable imprudences hovered upon, or crossed the barrier which separates levity from vice. The overt acts of Mary, alas! though the cheerfulness of her long prison hours and fortitude in death shield her (in every female bosom at least) from the charge of murder, were such as to leave a stain on her feminine purity; while the uniform serenity of Sophia Dorothea's still longer seclusion, and her refusal to quit it, to share with her unamiable consort the throne of England, are eminently favourable to the supposition of her freedom from guilt.

From so protracted an ordeal death came, perhaps kindly, to release the subject of the following memoir. But if the blameless, nay, exemplary tenor of her few brief years of retirement in her brother's dominions, the utmost calmness and firmness in the prospect of dissolution, uniform protestations of innocence, amid the consolations of religion, and the inexpressible grief of a sorrowing household (whose disinterested panegyrics, when their subject was, alas! no more, mingled with the tears of a population by whom she was adored), can warrant a favourable conclusion, she, who could

thus depart without a sigh or a regret, and that, too, when the fairest prospects of restoration to more than her former share of power and dignity were actually within her grasp, may surely be deemed more "sinned against than sinning," and though unquestionably imprudent unburdened with actual crime.

The unhappy Princess, whose wrongs and misfortunes will form the subject of the following pages, was the posthumous child of His Royal Highness Frederick, Prince of Wales, (eldest son of George II.) and sister to King George III. She was born July 22, 1751, four months and eight days after the death of her father, and christened Carolina Matilda. Had the nativity of this royal infant been cast, no astrologer, however fertile in evil omens, would have foretold that she was to be hurled, from the pinnacle of worldly grandeur, into a sea of troubles; and to become in the bloom of youth the sport of misfortune, and the victim of unrelenting hatred.

From her tenderest years, this amiable Princess displayed the most endearing vivacity, and a sweetness of temper, which secured to her the affection of her attendants. And, as she approached a maturer period, her heart and mind became susceptible of the most generous sentiments, and of a cultivation which fitted her to shine in the loftiest sphere, with reputation and dignity. Her education reflects the greatest credit on her able surviving parent. She was well read in modern history, conversant with geography; spoke with correctness, eloquence, and fluency, both French and German, and understood Latin. Her diction in English was pure, and her elocution graceful. She

could with facility repeat the finest passages from our dramatic poets, and often rehearsed, with great judgment and propriety, whole scenes from Shakespeare's most admired plays.

Nor was the casket unworthy of the gem within. Of her person, various contemporary descriptions agreeing in their main features, though varying slightly with years and circumstances, have been handed down to us. The English writer, to whom we are indebted for the above catalogue of her accomplishments, speaking of her as she quitted her native shores, thus expresses himself:—"Her person was above the middle size, and though well shaped, rather inclined to what the French call *embonpoint*. Her face was a regular oval, and her eye-brows, arched with symmetry, added sweetness and expression to her beautiful eyes. Her lips and teeth exhibited the lively colours of coral, and the whiteness of alabaster. She had a good complexion, though not so fair as some of the royal family, and her hair was of a light chestnut. Her voice was sweet and melodious, and her aspect rather gracious than majestic; but she had in her *tout ensemble* a most prepossessing physiognomy."*

Such, at sixteen, was Carolina Matilda of England. Subsequent portraits of her while the ornament of the Court of Denmark, and at a later and sadder period, when still lending grace and dignity to exile at Zell, will occur in the course of these memoirs.

It is delightful to find that in all the three so widely differing spheres, benevolence formed her prevailing attribute. Her girlish privy-purse, while in England, had been liberally opened to indigent families at Kew. In a Danish work, published many years after her

* Memoirs of an Unfortunate Queen.

decease, she is represented, on the authority of one long about her person, as herself visiting the poor around her residence at Fredericksbourg; and during the happy period of her earlier stay in the country, ere involved in the stormy politics of the day, as bearing with her own hands, not only supplies of money to destitute families, but stockings knitted for the children, by herself and her ladies. During her imprisonment at Cronenbourg, she found leisure, amid her overwhelming calamities, to extend her compassion to some unhappy state prisoners, her companions in captivity, to whom she daily sent two dishes from her scantily furnished table, and for whom she weekly saved a sum from her own insufficient allowance; and during her brief residence of two years and a half at Zell, her unconstrained liberality and beneficence, which frequently left her without money for her own personal expenses, so endeared her to the whole population, that they followed, drowned in tears, the funeral of one mourned by them for years as a general benefactress.

Thus richly endowed by nature, and cultivated by education, was the youthful Princess whom, at sixteen, political considerations were about to consign to a sadly uncongenial partner. "Whether," says her biographer, "the picture of the young monarch who had asked her in marriage, had not conveyed to her mind the idea of the man she could prefer, or that she looked upon her destination as an honourable exile into the frozen regions of the north, it is certain that her future elevation to a throne, which she was fitted to adorn, inspired her Royal Highness with no pleasing sensations. On the contrary, it was observed by the ladies of her attendance, after this alliance was declared, that she became pensive, reserved and disquieted, though always gracious; without taking upon herself more state, or

requiring more homage from the persons admitted into her presence."

But however much subsequent events, and further acquaintance with the moral and mental deficiencies of Christian VII. might lead all connected with their victim to deplore this union, it was not on the score of deficiency in personal recommendations, or even of original talent, though of a peculiar and eccentric kind, that Carolina Matilda must have entertained misgivings as to her chances of happiness with her boy-bridegroom. He is thus described from Danish authorities on his first accession to the kingdom, at the age of seventeen :— "The person of the young king, though considerably under the middle height, was finely proportioned, light and compact, but yet possessing a considerable degree of agility and strength. His complexion remarkably fair, his features, if not handsome, were regular, his eyes blue, lively and expressive, his hair very light; he had a good forehead and aquiline nose, a handsome mouth, and fine set of teeth. He was elegant rather than magnificent in his dress, courteous in his manners, though warm and irritable in his temper, but his anger, if soon excited, was easily appeased, and he was generous to profusion."

Such were the person and disposition of Christian VII., till surrounded by his ambitious step-mother by a crowd of voluptuous and gay young courtiers, in whose society his morals were corrupted, and his constitution undermined; and betrayed into all manner of pernicious excesses by those whose duty it was to have watched over, admonished, and protected him.

There were various circumstances which, independently of the limited number of Protestant royal families affording suitable alliances for a daughter of England, seemed to hold out flattering, though fallacious, auguries

respecting the proposals of the young King of Denmark. Himself the offspring of an English princess—no trifling recommendation in British eyes—he might be presumed to inherit, along with the amiable dispositions of his mother, if not the rare talents for government, at least the virtuous and moral qualities which so richly adorned his father, Frederick V., one of the most excellent monarchs whom premature decease, at the age of forty-six, ever snatched from a sorrowing nation.

When the Prince Royal was proclaimed King, amidst the acclamations of "Long live Christian VII.," the people cried out, "May he not only live long, but reign well like his father!"

That such would be the case, thus descended, it was not unnatural for his English connections to conclude, or at least to hope, of a youth of seventeen; who, if he had hitherto certainly manifested no talent, is admitted to have joined to a fatal facility of disposition, a good-nature and graciousness which, during his stay in England, even after his marriage, and when his character was better known, served in some degree to redeem his deficiencies in solid instruction, and devotion to frivolous pursuits.

But had his natural endowments been greater than they were, there was much in the young Prince's position to counterbalance his paternal advantages. At the age of three years, he had lost (in 1751) his mother, Louisa of England;* and on the union, a year after, of his father with Juliana Maria of Brunswick Wolfenbuttel, that Princess—if cherishing, as is hinted, (even in the life-time of her husband) the ambitious projects she afterwards carried into effect—had ample opportunities of repressing, rather than fostering, at that tender age, the slender capacities and unformed principles of

* Daughter of George II., an amiable and accomplished Princess.

the heir to the crown; who alone stood in the way of its possession by her own son Frederick, his junior by only four years.

The boundless authority bequeathed, under such peculiar and delicate circumstances, to a princess, whose talents (except for political intrigue) no party has represented as at all distinguished, forms, perhaps, the sole impeachment on the discernment and judgment of Frederick V. "This King," says a contemporary writer, "though one of the wisest monarchs of his time, either blinded by affection, or deluded by the acts of his second Queen, gave to this ambitious stepmother a power which the dictates of sound policy should never have vested in a woman of her aspiring views. She was to direct the councils of the young Sovereign, and to keep in her hands the reins of government, till he should have attained the years of maturity. The Dowager Queen, Juliana Maria, even before the King had closed his eyes, planned the bold and iniquitous scheme of snatching the sceptre from the feeble hands of Christian VII., whose youth and timidity forwarded the evil designs of this artful princess. She had often, it is said, even during the lifetime of Frederick V., displayed, in his absence, her ill-will towards the Prince Royal, he being the sole obstacle to her son Frederick's mounting the throne, to which she was passionately desirous of raising him.

"Whether through fear, or policy, when at the age of seventeen, Christian VII. attained the crown, he paid his mother-in-law, notwithstanding the disdain with which she treated him, all the deference which seemed due to her rank and authority in council. He never testified his firmness, or had the courage to defend his own opinion, on any other occasion than in the choice of Carolina Matilda of England; whilst the

Queen Dowager neither approved of the alliance, nor of the time fixed for the union." Happy would it have been for all concerned, had she succeeded in averting the inauspicious alliance!

It was under circumstances thus critical and unpropitious to future happiness that the amiable and ill-fated Carolina Matilda gave her hand, in the sixteenth year of her age, at the Chapel Royal, St. James's, on the 1st of October, 1766, to Christian VII. of Denmark. The parting between the Queen of Denmark and her royal mother, the Princess of Wales, was extremely tender; the young Queen, on getting into the coach, was observed to shed tears, which greatly affected the populace assembled in Pall Mall to witness her departure.

"Her Majesty was dressed in bloom-colour with white flowers. Wherever she passed, the earnest wishes of the people were for her health, and praying God to protect her from the perils of the sea. A gentle melancholy seemed to affect her on account of leaving her family, and the place of her birth; but, upon the whole, she carried an air of serenity and majesty which exceedingly moved every one that beheld her.

"On the 18th the Queen of Denmark arrived at Altona, and it is impossible to express the joy with which she was received. The bridge prepared for the royal reception was covered with scarlet cloth, on one side whereof were ranged the ladies, and on the other the men; and at the end were two rows of young women, dressed in white, who strewed flowers before her Majesty as she approached. The illuminations on the occasion were *inconceivable*."

How irresistibly do these details of the contemporary chronicler, in the quaint language of the times—the "bloom-coloured" dress, white wreath, and flowers strewed before the virgin bride by the young maidens

of her new dominions, suggest to those acquainted with the sad sequel, the idea of an unconscious victim proceeding to her doom! Yet, among those who witnessed this brilliant reception, who would have ventured to predict that within five years, the interposition of her royal brother of England, would have been called for, to rescue from popular fury, and the virulence of faction, the princess so enthusiastically hailed; or imagined that the cannon which pealed their welcome from the forts of her new capital would, within that period, with extorted courtesy, give the signal for her perpetual exile from a kingdom, of which she had been the delight and ornament? It was not till after the event, that an honest eye-witness thus remarks: "The tears of her Majesty on parting from the dear country in which she drew her first breath, might have inspired in those who beheld them, gloomy forebodings as to the issue of the voyage she was about to undertake."

There were circumstances in the birth and education of the youthful traveller, which, while they enhanced the pangs of separation to all concerned, must have tended to unfit her in a peculiar manner to encounter not only avowed or ill-concealed hostility, but even the usual cold ceremonial of a then excessively stiff and formal northern court; which, from the accounts of her reception by such of its members as had been deputed to meet her on landing, (as ascribed to herself, but more probably derived from some of her suite) was abundantly freezing. "The gentlemen and ladies sent to compliment me," (says a letter not sufficiently authenticated to find insertion, but corroborated by many genuine testimonies in the ensuing pages,) "made no addition to my entertainment; besides the reservedness and gravity peculiar to their nation, they thought it was a mark of

respect and submission, never to presume to answer me but by monosyllables, and they appeared in the circle, inanimate, like the wax figures in Westminster Abbey."

Repulsive as an etiquette so frigid might have appeared to any princess of sixteen, fresh from the comparatively unconstrained domestic circle with which George the Third, and his consort, delighted to surround themselves—it was from a hearth more hallowed still—from almost the bosom of a happy private family, that Carolina Matilda was transported to the morally and physically frozen regions of the north. Born after the early and sudden demise of a father, whom political circumstances had estranged from the throne, to which he did not live to succeed, how fondly must this posthumous pledge of conjugal affection, have been folded to a widowed mother's heart; and how genial must have been the atmosphere in which the natural talents, and acquired accomplishments of the youngest of a large and happy family, were precociously developed!

If the merit of *vraisemblance* (if not of authenticity) belongs to a collection of letters, published in England just after her decease, when numbers could have recognised or disputed the likeness—the liveliness of her disposition, and familiarity of her intercourse with her friends and correspondents, equalled that facility of epistolary style for which the royal family of England has ever been distinguished; while the total absence of all knowledge even of the external world, (implied in her never having been further from London than Windsor, previously to her inauspicious marriage) sent her forth as unprepared to encounter its stern realities, as some tender exotic, from her favourite summer abode at Kew, would have been to meet the blasts of the

climate, to which she was herself transplanted. And to pursue the parallel, familiar to all who, like her, take delight in "observing and directing a garden," when, to the chill of a reception, calculated to send back the warm blood of youth in a frozen tide to the heart—succeeded a trying sunshine of prosperity and power, too much akin to the brief scorching summer of hyperborean regions—who can wonder that the English flower sunk prematurely withered beneath the noxious vicissitude? With no stay in an imbecile and profligate husband, to whom she could legitimately cling for support; estranged by distance from her own fond parent, and destined to find in the nominal one of her consort, a personification of the qualities ascribed (often erroneously) to stepmothers,

"A little more than kin, and less than kind—"

could it be matter of surprise that the first prop, however essentially unsafe and unworthy, which held out its fallacious aid to lift from the dust the tempest-beaten, nay trampled, scion of royalty, should be eagerly hailed, and grasped with fatal tenacity, till the same long-gathering storm laid them both prostrate in a night?

Had even the "craft and dissimulation" ascribed by some authors to the Queen Dowager, induced her to affect cordiality towards her stepson's wife, now that the knot was indissolubly tied; her previous hostility to the match, and its motives, were no secret, and are thus broadly stated by a contemporary writer:

"As from the weak and delicate constitution of the young monarch, he might probably have quitted this life without posterity, had his marriage been deferred, the secret motive for her opposition was manifest to all. Moreover, she saw in the young Queen a rival in the

ascendancy she had usurped over the mind of the King, and in the power she was resolved to maintain in the council. She could not conceal her resentment, when Queen Matilda first appeared at Copenhagen, and made her entry into the capital, with all the advantages of youth and beauty, amid the unanimous acclamations of a people, delighted with her grace and affability."

"It was neither," says a Danish writer, in describing this *entrée*, "the powerful connexions, the high lineage, nor the ample dowry, which this young and interesting princess brought to my country, that commanded universal admiration and esteem; but her youth, her innocence, her beauty, and her *modest retiring* graceful demeanour, that fascinated all who beheld her. I saw this ill-fated princess when she first set her foot on the soil of Denmark. I did not join in the shouts of the multitude; but I was charmed with her appearance. She was received like a divinity, and almost worshipped, at least by those of the male sex. Her animated beauteous features, her fine blue eyes, beamed with delight on all around her. That youth must have been a stoic, whose heart, if not devoted to some prior object, would not have been enslaved by this fair foreigner, then little more than fifteen."

"The conduct of Matilda," pursues the same eye-witness, "on her arrival in Denmark, was such as left no room but for approbation; possessing somewhat of the *hauteur* by which her family are distinguished, she certainly did not forget the dignity of her station. While the King, descending from his rank, made companions of *his* gay young courtiers, Matilda exacted the homage from the ladies of her court to which her exalted station entitled her; and, as was natural at her age, seemed more fond of the show and pageantry of royalty, than desirous of political influence. Notwith-

standing the vices of her husband, as he had a large fund of good-nature and generosity, she might have avoided the calamities that too soon overtook her, had it not been for the insinuations of conflicting nobles, emulous for power, and the ceaseless intrigues of Juliana Maria. The acclamations which resounded whenever Matilda appeared in public, smote on her heart as the death-knell of her ambitious hopes, of securing the crown of Denmark for Prince Frederick (her own son), then in his thirteenth year. Still, she did not relinquish her darling projects, even when her hopes were blasted by the tidings that filled all Denmark with exultation. She had, from the time the Queen's pregnancy was announced, secluded herself in a great measure from court. For the two last months she buried herself, as it were, in her palace of Fredensborg, till, to complete her dismay, on the 28th January, 1768, the thunder of a thousand pieces of ordnance, from the forts and fleets of Zealand, proclaimed the safe delivery of the young Queen, and the birth of a male child."

Had the disappointed maternal feelings of the step-mother been limited in their effect to the somewhat impolitic omission, in her own chapel, of the customary prayers, on this auspicious occasion, and to the lingering hopes founded on the puny sickly frame of the infant heir of Denmark, human nature, perhaps, rather than any special malignity in her own disposition, might have accounted for their existence. But while disposed to reject, as unauthenticated fabrications of party-spirit, many atrocious tales of direct attempts, on the part of Juliana Maria, to remove by poison in infancy, the step-son who came between the throne and her darling child; it is impossible, on such hosts of concurring testimony, to acquit her of efforts (scarcely less criminal) to blight at a maturer period his bodily and mental

health, and to undermine, by separation and misrepresentation, his chances of domestic happiness.

"It was now the policy of this artful woman to persuade the credulous king to abandon his wife and his dominions to the mercy of the dangerous cabal which she had already formed, under pretence of embellishing his understanding with useful knowledge and instruction by travel and observation, in visiting the principal courts of Europe. She hoped that his absence would entirely extinguish the last sparks of conjugal affection, that no other heirs than the Prince Royal should form a bar to her son's succession; and that the young Queen, thus neglected, would commit some imprudent action, of which the Dowager might wickedly avail herself to censure her conduct and render her virtue suspected. The vivacity, cheerfulness and easy carriage of Matilda, amidst a phlegmatic and reserved nation, formed a happy presage to the success of her enemy's designs; while, except Count Bernstorff, that great statesman whom Christian VII. had continued at the head of affairs, and who had compelled the Queen Dowager to dread his virtue, which she could not corrupt, there was scarcely one among the lords who were to accompany the King, that was not calculated to pervert by his councils an already debauched prince."

The debût in England of the giddy boy is said to have been highly characteristic. Being preceded on his arrival in the royal yacht, the Mary, at Dover, by one of his chamberlains, as an *avant-courier* to announce the landing of the royal Dane, a train of royal carriages and domestics was sent down to convey the King and his numerous suite to London;* but such was his

* Christian VII. was lodged in those apartments in the stable-yard, lately occupied by the Duke of Clarence, and where the King of Prussia

impatience to see the famed metropolis of Great Britain, that he declined those sumptuous vehicles and travelled in a post-chaise.

Having heard that the clergy and corporation of Canterbury and Rochester intended to receive him with all possible pomp, he was thrown almost into a passion, being averse to formalities of every sort, and accustomed to consider the clergy, as a body, with profligate contempt. He said to Count Bernstorff, "The last King of Denmark who entered Canterbury laid that city in ashes and massacred the inhabitants. Would to God they had recollected this, and let me pass quietly through their venerable town, where our ancestors committed so many crimes!" The Count told him, with a smile, that the good citizens of Canterbury would find less difficulty in forgetting the outrages suffered by their forefathers, than in being deprived of the honour of making him a speech and kissing his royal hand. Finding the ceremony inevitable, he entreated the Count to intimate beforehand his antipathy to long speeches.

In disposition, person, manners, and habits, Christian VII. was the reverse of his cousin and brother-in-law, George III.; whose regularity and dignified demeanour were objects of ridicule to the wild youth and his dissolute associates; and instead of his example reclaiming Christian from vicious conduct, the latter laughed at his cousin's domestic habits, as alike void of elegance and spirit. His errors and vices may, however, claim more than ordinary indulgence, from the pains early taken to eradicate the seeds of virtue from his mind.

was lodged in 1814. When Count Holke, the extravagant and dissipated companion of the King, first saw their *exterior*, he exclaimed, "By Heaven, this will never do; it is not fit to lodge a *Christian!*"

As the periodical publications of the day present a faithful detail of the festivities and illuminations, balls, concerts, masquerades, military, and nautical spectacles, tours by land, and excursions by water, that took place in England in honour of the young King, and marked the popularity which, in right of his alliance with a British princess, he enjoyed on her native soil, it would be superfluous to go into this fatiguing detail. Among the most sumptuous of these entertainments, the chronicles of the time enumerate those given by the Princess Amelia, the Princess Dowager of Wales, and the Duke of Northumberland, and a princely banquet from the city of London, the very dishes at which have been deemed worthy of record; and the *tout ensemble* of which, with its 2000 wax lights, brilliant decorations, and yet more brilliant galaxy of British beauties, quite dazzled the mind and senses of the boyish guest.

The festivities were wound up by a grand ball, given to Christian by their Majesties of England, (by whom his table during his residence was defrayed, at an expense of 84*l.* per day;) and a far more numerous, if not so select masquerade, given, in return for the civilities he had experienced, by the Danish monarch, at the Haymarket theatre, to 2500 persons of distinction, the greatest number then known to have been assembled on any similar occasion.

Of this royal visit, Horace Walpole, the prince of gossips, thus writes to General Conway.

"The King of Denmark comes on Thursday, and I go up to-morrow to see him. It has cost three thousand pounds to new furnish an apartment for him at St. James's, and they say he will not go thither, supposing it would be a confinement, but is to lie at his own Minister Dieden's. Pray let the Danish King see such

good specimens as yourself and Lady Aylesbury, of the last age; though by what I hear, he likes nothing but the very present age. You will, no doubt, both come and look at him; not that I believe he is a jot better than the apprentices who flirt to Epsom in a Tim Whisky."

To George Montagu he says:—

"I came to town to see the Danish King. He is as diminutive as if he came out of a kernel in the fairy tales. He is not ill made, nor weakly made, though so small; and though his face is pale and delicate, it is not at all ugly. Still he has more royalty than folly in his air, and considering he is not twenty, is as well as any one expects a King in a puppet-show to be. He arrived on Thursday, supped and slept at St. James's. Yesterday evening he was at the Queen's, and Carlton House, and at night at Lady Hertford's assembly. He only takes the title of *Altesse* (an absurd *mezzo termine*) but acts King exceedingly: struts in the circle like a cock-sparrow, and does the honours of himself very civilly.

"There is a favourite, too, who seems a complete Jackanapes; a young fellow called Holke, well enough in his figure, and about three-and-twenty, but who will be *tumbled down*, long *before he is prepared for it*. Bernstorff, a Hanoverian, his first minister, is a decent sensible man. I pity him, though I suppose he is envied. From Lady Hertford's, they went to Ranelagh; and to-night go to the Opera. There had like to have been an untoward circumstance. The last new Opera in the spring, which was exceedingly pretty, was called *I Viaggiatori Ridicoli*, and they were on the point of acting it for this Royal Traveller!"

To Lord Stafford, a few days later, Walpole thus gossips on:—

"A royal visitor, quite fresh, is a real curiosity; by the reception of him I do not think any more of the breed will come hither. He came from Dover in hackney-chaises, for somehow or other, the Master of the Horse happened to be in Lincolnshire; and the King's coaches having received no orders, were too good subjects to go and fetch a stranger king of their own heads. However, as his Danish Majesty travels to improve himself, for the good of his people, he will go back extremely enlightened in the arts of government and morality, by having learned that crowned heads may be reduced to ride in hack-chaises."

The coldness and tardiness of reception before alluded to, is thus corroborated by Walpole in the same letter:—

"By another mistake, King George happened to go to Richmond, about an hour before King Christian arrived in London. An hour is exceedingly long, and the distance to Richmond still longer; so with all the dispatch which could possibly be made, King George could not get back to his capital till next day at noon. Then, as the road from his closet at St. James's, to the King of Denmark's apartment, on t'other side of the palace, is about thirty miles (which posterity, having no conceptions of the prodigious extent and magnificence of St. James's, will never believe) it was half an hour after three before his Danish Majesty's cousin could go and return, to let him know that his good brother and ally was leaving the palace (in which they both were) to receive him at the Queen's palace, which you know is about a million of snail's paces from St. James's.

"Notwithstanding these difficulties, and unavoidable delays, Woden, Thor, Frigga, and all the gods that watch over the kings of the north, did bring these two

invincible monarchs to each other's embraces, about half an hour after five the same evening. They passed an hour in projecting a family compact, that will regulate the destiny of Europe to latest posterity; and then, the Fates so willing it, the British prince departed for Richmond, and the Danish potentate repaired to the widowed mansion of his royal mother-in-law, where he poured forth the fulness of his heart, in praises of the lovely bride she had bestowed upon him, from whom nothing but the benefit of his subjects could have torn him."

After this strain of irony—corroborative it will be perceived, of the hollow footing of the royal brothers-in-law—and some scandalous anecdotes, only too confirmatory of popular rumours as to the foreign one, the lively narrator thus sums up:—

"Well then, this great king is a very little one. He has the sublime strut of his grandfather (or a cock-sparrow), and the divine white eyes of all his family on the mother's side. His curiosity seems to have consisted in the original plan of travelling, for I cannot say he takes notice of anything in particular. The mob adore, and huzza him, and so they did at the first instant. They now begin to know why, for he flings money to them out of the window, and by the end of the week I do not doubt they will want to choose him for Middlesex. His court is extremely well ordered, for they bow as low to him at every word as if his name were Sultan Amurath. You would take his first minister for only the first of his slaves. I hope this example, which they have been good enough to exhibit at the Opera, will civilize us. There is, indeed, a pert young gentleman who a little discomposes this august ceremonial; his name is Count Holke, his age three-and-twenty, and his post answers to one that we had

formerly in England, ages ago, called in our tongue, a high favourite. Minerva, in the shape of Count Bernstorff (or *out* of all shape in the person of the Duchess of ——) is to conduct Telemachus to York races;—for can a monarch be perfectly accomplished in the mysteries of *king-craft*, unless initiated in the arts of jockey-ship?"

It would have been well, had these amusements, perhaps natural at the age of the boy-king, who was not yet twenty, alone divided his time and heart with those more ostensible objects of his tour, visits to the universities, and chief towns of the kingdom, (some of the former *characteristically* performed in a "hunting coat and boots," on his way to more congenial scenes at York or Newmarket); and all with a breathless rapidity, which forced from even a very courtier-like chronicler the remark that "if His Majesty is not a youth of more than common talent, he must have a very confused idea of what he sees."

"Good-nature," says another, "which is the characteristic of the English nation, made them give the most favourable construction to the motives of the King's travels, which were, in fact, the natural consequence of his giddiness and levity. Whatever he seemed desirous to see, and all the enquiries worthy of a monarch who seeks for instruction, and improvement in arts, civilization and government, were suggested by Count Bernstorff, Secretary of State, the only man of merit and virtue in his retinue. His own inclinations led him to plays, operas, balls, and excursions of pleasure, in which a Sovereign may indulge himself occasionally, as a relaxation from the grand objects of useful study and information. He was gracious and accessible, but without discernment, and without dignity. The very citizens of both sexes, who resorted daily to his

apartments at St. James's, to see him dine in public with his favourites—mistook him more than once for a young girl, dressed in man's clothes, whose conversation and deportment commanded neither respect nor attention. His confidants were of the same stamp. Count Holke, who, like Narcissus, seemed his own admirer, was a foppish shallow courtier, *sur le bon ton* at the Court of Copenhagen, and highly distinguished by the favour of his master. Molke, his rival in the royal confidence, had less presumption, more dexterity and knowledge of the world than the other, with an equal propensity to pleasure and gallantry. The numerous intrigues into which, even in London, they led their inexperienced master, were of the lowest and most discreditable nature. Nor did the reports of them which reached Copenhagen tend to diminish the disgust of his Queen for her ill-assorted partner.

"Volumes," it is said,—(probably more honoured in their suppression than publication) "might be compiled from the frolics and extravagances committed while in England by this dissipated youth and those servile courtiers, who, to gratify their Sovereign, flattered every folly, and sought with lamentable avidity, even in the paths of infamy and vice, the means of making themselves useful or agreeable." One anecdote alone, of a less exceptionable nature, is given by the Danish writer already quoted; and while illustrative of the reckless profusion* which characterised the King during his residence abroad, is only one of many adventures to which his practice of going out incog. gave rise.

For the better supply of his wants, the King had caused an unlimited credit to be opened with a very

* He used to carry gold coins in one pocket, and silver in the other, which he gave away by handfulls on every occasion.

rich, but penurious city merchant, under the assumed name of Mr. Frederickson. Dressed as private gentlemen, the King and Count Holke went to the merchant's counting-house, and took up four thousand pounds. The merchant, very desirous of knowing more of such good customers, employed a lad to watch them; but spite of his dexterity, the strangers got off unperceived.

The clerk who had been employed on this service, happening to pass through the palace at St. James's, and seeing the same strangers enter by a private door, was delighted to be told by the sentry, that they *must* belong to the suite of the King of Denmark, as none others were allowed to pass in that way, and communicated his information to his master, who was charmed at the prospect of thus making a handsome profit on the rencontre; while his wife equally bent on obtaining by their means, a view of the King of Denmark, or at least of his apartments, strongly suggested the expediency of inviting them, on their next visit, *to tea.*

This civility the strangers, whom it not a little amused, had succeeded in evading, when the further necessities of the prodigal monarch brought them a second time to the merchant's counting-house; when the merchant, leaving Count Holke in conversation with his wife, took the king, (the supposed Mr. Frederickson) by the lappel of his coat, and led him to a little distance from his companion; and after some cautious circumlocutions, regarding commercial speculations, asked him in direct terms, "if the money was not for the use of Christian the Seventh?" The king thought at first he was detected, but finding that not to be the case, and that the merchant only wanted to get a share of a good thing, he resolved to draw him on, in hopes of amusement, and answered his question in the affirmative.

The merchant's eyes sparkled with joy at this confession. "I am told," said he "that Christian the Seventh is one of the most extravagant and thoughtless young dogs living, and cares no more for money than if it could be raked out of the kennel. Of course you make him pay handsomely? Eh, you understand me?"

It was with difficulty the King could refrain from laughter; but, as gravely as he could, he told the man of traffic that he had drawn a correct picture of the King's character. "And pray, sir," said the latter, significantly, "what is the nature of your employment?"—"My chief employment," replied Christian, "consists in dressing the King, and looking out for amusements." "Just the thing!" said the merchant; "then you are the more likely to have influence."—"No man has more influence with him than I have; of that be assured." "Then of course you make a handsome thing of those advances?" "Upon my word and honour, I never made a profit on any pecuniary transaction in my life!" The merchant's face fell, considerably lengthened, as he turned his small eyes obliquely towards the King. After a pause, he began on another tack. "How does the King dispose of these sums?"—"Gives them away, sometimes in coin or bank-notes; oftener in presents of jewellery or other precious articles." "Heark'ee, sir," said the merchant, delighted by these confessions; "would you not wish to make the best of your influence with the King?"—"Certainly I would." "Then, if you will suffer me to instruct you, I will teach you how to make fifty per cent. on the capital. Let me buy the jewels and presents." Just at that instant one of the King's pages arrived, and desired the clerk to call his master, who was never less disposed to be interrupted. "Pray, sir," said the messenger, "is not the King of Denmark in your

house?"—"The King of Denmark! No, sir, only a Mr. Frederickson." "That is the King—the son of Frederick the Fifth; the gentleman with him is Count Holke, master of his Majesty's wardrobe; and I am sent by the Princess Dowager of Wales, and am ordered to deliver this letter into his Majesty's own hands."

The confusion of the merchant and his wife at this *denouement* may safely be left to the imagination. The former disappeared, but the good-natured King, forcing a ring on the fat finger of the latter, and desiring her to tell her husband that Christian would never feel offended at what he had said confidentially to Mr. Frederickson, skipped down stairs, laughing heartily at the adventure, and regretting that it had been so suddenly terminated.

Had the young King's natural levity permitted him to profit by, as well as forgive the warnings he occasionally received during the incognito rambles in which he indulged, one good effect at least might have accrued from the unkingly pastime. It is said, on the same authority on which rests the preceding anecdote, that having gone one evening, in disguise, to a place of resort, much frequented by Danish and Swedish ship-masters, whose conversation naturally turned on the splendid festivities daily given in honour of Christian —— Count Holke, who piqued himself on the purity of his German, asked an old skipper what he thought of his King; and if he were not proud of the honours paid to him by the English? "I think," said he, drily, "that with such counsellers as *Count Holke,* if he escapes destruction, it will be by miracle." "Do you know Count Holke, friend," said he, "that you speak of him thus familiarly?" "Only by report," said the Dane, "but every body in Copenhagen pities the young Queen; attributing the coolness the King showed to her, as he

set out on this voyage, to the malice of Count Holke." The confusion of the minion may be conceived; while the King, giving the skipper a handful of ducats, bade him "speak the truth, and shame the devil." The moment the King spoke in Danish, the old man knew him, and looking at him with love and reverence, said in a low and subdued tone, "Forgive me, Sire, but I cannot conceal my grief to see you exposed to the temptation of this vast metropolis, under the pilotage of the most dissolute nobleman in Denmark."

Holke's confusion was not a little increased, by the seeming countenance given by the King (who by no means wanted tact and quickness) to the rudeness of the blunt old Dane; and it is added, that the incident (as repeated by Christian to Struensee) laid, notwithstanding the caution in commenting on it of the latter, the first step towards the fall of Holke, and the subsequent, though not immediate, rise of his rival. Struensee, it is said, from this time saw with secret rapture the brilliant path opening to his view; that rapidly led him to the highest pitch of fortune, only to precipitate him the more suddenly to the depth of debasement and misery.

To return to the subject of the Danish monarch's profusion. It was such, that although his brother-in-law supported a table, for himself and his suite, at the cost of five hundred dollars per diem, he got rid, in various ways, of five times that sum; drawing on Hamburgh for more than a hundred thousand dollars per month; which enormous drain of specie was sensibly felt on the exchange of Copenhagen; the more so, as the absence of the King and his principal ministers threw a gloom over the metropolis, and injured trade and commerce. From the sketches already given, it will be conceived that Christian VII. rather scattered

his treasures than bestowed them; that acting on the impulse of the moment, he gave without discrimination; and it is too probable that from the audacity of impostors, and modesty of suffering merit, the former class of applicants swallowed the greater part of his largesses. But yet, wherever real misery met his eye, his hand went, as it were, spontaneously, into his pocket; and if that chanced to be empty, his ring, his watch, or any other valuable about him, was bestowed instead of money.

He once saw a poor tradesman put into a hackney-coach by two bailiffs, followed by his weeping wife and family, from whom he was about to be torn, and thrown into prison. He ordered Count Molke to follow the coach to the Marshalsea; he paid the debt and costs, and setting the poor man free from every other demand, gave him five hundred dollars to enable him to begin the world anew; and on several other occasions he distributed considerable sums among the poor debtors confined in the different jails of the metropolis. Though indifferent to the pursuits of science, and by no means a warm patron of literature, or the fine arts, he was not insensible to the dramatic superiority of the British stage. Garrick was honoured with an audience, and the King paid homage to his genius by repeating a line from Shakespeare as he presented him with a very valuable snuff-box set with brilliants.

After distributing many other magnificent presents, and taking leave of the King, Queen, and royal family, the King of Denmark, on the 3rd of October, 1768, set off for Dover, where he embarked for Calais, and proceeded to Paris. There he was received with all the *éclat* and magnificence in the power of that voluptuous court to bestow on a Prince who had travelled so far to witness its polish and splendour. Here, the treasures of France and Denmark were poured forth in a mingled

stream; and fresh reports of her husband's excesses were conveyed from thence to his neglected consort. "As however," she is reported to have said on the occasion, "it was the monarch and not the man whom I received injunctions to marry, the consciousness of having strictly adhered to my duty to His Majesty, and the respect I owe to myself, form a secret satisfaction of which neither malice nor envy can deprive me." Let us hope that in a yet darker and sadder period of domestic trial, the same conviction formed the groundwork of a serenity, and composure, which did not desert her even on the approach of death!

But if even at the moral court of London the conduct of the young King had been such as to give room for scandal, the finishing touch to his already corrupt inclinations was given by the dissolute court atmosphere of France. Paris, the centre of dissipation, frivolity, and gaiety, afforded the King and his attendants but too ready a succession of pleasures suited to their tastes. Ladies of high rank, flattered by the homage of the monarch, while they despised the man, disputed the unenviable notoriety of his attentions; and in the court of Louis XV. immersed in gallantry, Christian found a sanction and example for every excess. The two kings often supped together, *en partie quarrée*, laying aside, in mutual freedom and convivial mirth, all stateliness and majesty. The time fixed for Christian's departure made him lament the fate of royalty; and in taking his leave of the French monarch, he declared Versailles and Paris, under his Majesty's auspices, the favourite abode of Apollo, Venus, and Minerva!*

* The title of Apollo (for which Bacchus would have been an appropriate substitute), and still more of Minerva, to figure in such society, may well amuse as well as mystify the reader. That Diana, at least in her capacity of patroness of the chase, might have occupied the place of

"The great partiality and manifest influence which the King gave to French connexions during his abode at the court of Versailles, were undoubtedly impolitic; and disclosed that his affinity with the royal family of England did not coincide with his inclinations, or with the system he was directed to pursue. Queen Matilda having been informed that his Majesty had bestowed a regiment of Danish cavalry on the son of the Duke of Duras,* said 'he was a very good Frenchman, but a very

the goddess of wisdom, appears from the following description of a *fête* given to the King of Denmark, at the princely domain of the ancestor of the Duc D'Enghien :—

"The entertainment given to the King of Denmark by the Prince of Condé, at Chantilly, surpassed any other, except that given by the King, our Sovereign. It was on Monday last, the 28th instant. It being *free to all persons*, it is computed that there were at least six thousand present; there went such a prodigious concourse of the nobility and gentry of both sexes to it, that the Rue St. Denis, which is longer than Holborn, was filled with carriages from end to end, insomuch that there was no passage through it. The entertainment continued three days and three nights, during which there was an open house kept for all comers and goers, without exception. There was, likewise, *a most grand hunt* in the forest of Chantilly, by torch-light. After a wild boar had been chased for a good while, he was killed by a nobleman with a bow and arrow."

* Of the important nature of the services by which the Duc de Duras may have earned this *unique* recompense, we may judge from the ludicrous anecdote given by Madame de Crèquy in her "Souvenirs" :—

"Madame de Blot, equally famous for her beauty and affectation, had a little dog, such a favourite, that in her temporary absences, she not only expected her *démoiselle de compagnie* to keep it amused by conversation, but gravely proposed her reading to it a five-act play!

"On this darling, a fat Sacristan from Franche Comté had inadvertently squatted; and having reason to deem the mischief irremediable, ere the faint movements of the animal apprised him of its fate, the wily culprit, by twisting the tail round his hand, and expanding to the utmost his huge person, succeeded in gradually transferring, unobserved, to his pocket, the 'canine favourite' (for 'dog' was a word too vulgar to cross its mistress's lips), and getting rid of it the first opportunity.

"Madame de Blot never knew what had become of her dog; some told her it had been turned into a sylph, and others that, like Hylas, it had been carried off by the nymphs. The wags, however, succeeded in

bad politician.' This stroke of humour was communicated to him, with many aggravating circumstances, by the emissaries of the Dowager; and on his return to his dominions, unjustly prejudiced against his consort, instead of testifying his joy and fondness at their first meeting, he sought to mortify her by his coolness and indifference. The Queen Dowager, who had gone so far as to insinuate to the King, during his residence in France and England, that the Queen had connexions that were too close with some of her favourites, congratulated him on his return, with all exterior marks of exultation, in the name of all his loyal subjects; wickedly adding, that several of his most faithful nobles had retired to their estates, during his absence, to avoid the insults of some new men admitted to the young Queen's favour. All these false and malicious insinuations alienated the King's affection still more from his amiable consort; who saw herself surrounded with spies, devoted to the sinister designs of an intriguing and perfidious woman.*"

How false and malicious were these accusations, how grossly at variance with truth, as well as with the natural character of one, afterwards goaded by injustice into a line of conduct less prudent and irreproachable, we have happily the testimony of a Danish writer, whose dispassionate tone and general impartiality lend weight to this following pleasing counter-statement.

"During the absence of her giddy lord," writes this author, "Matilda resided principally at the palace of

persuading her that the Duc de Duras, who had been appointed to do the honours of the capital to his Majesty, had had the dog stolen to find favour in the eyes of the *King of Denmark;* and she was on the eve of writing to the latter to beg back her dog, or at least recommend him to the royal protection, when those in the secret interposed."

* Memoirs of an Unfortunate Queen.

Fredericksborg in the neighbourhood of Copenhagen, and her conduct was free from reproach. Though courted and menaced by conflicting factions, she joined with none; nor showed the least ambition for political power. She appeared to feel a truly maternal affection for her child, and, in spite of remonstrances, had the infant and nurse to sleep in her own apartment. She sometimes visited, and was visited by the Queen Dowager, but lived very retired. She was grown in stature, and appeared much more womanly than when she arrived in Denmark. The glow of robust health was on her cheek; she often nursed her child; and a more interesting object could scarcely be conceived than this lovely and lively young queen playing with her babe.

"During this period of retirement, she visited the houses of the farmers and peasants who resided near the palace; and though she could not converse fluently with these poor grateful people, she gained their warm hearts by her condescension in visiting their cottages, smiling graciously on their wives and daughters, and distributing useful presents. Thus innocently Queen Matilda passed her time, during the travels of her wild and dissipated husband.*"

Considerable obscurity, and discrepancies difficult to reconcile at this distance of time, seem to hang over the political events which ensued immediately on the king's return; and previous to the reconciliation with his consort, by which power was, fatally for her peace, transferred to her hands from those of the Dowager Queen. The most sweeping changes, however, took place in the administration, while the ascendancy in the royal councils still remained with the latter; and are thus narrated, though with probably erroneous views of their exact motives, by the imperfectly informed English biographer of the queen:—

* Danish MS., quoted in "Brown's Northern Courts."

"Ere long, Queen Juliana, whose desire was to govern alone the King's councils, saw with a jealous eye the high favour in which Count Holke was held, and the confidence with which the King honoured the companions of his travels. By means of secret manœuvres, Counts Holke, Molke, Thott and Reventlow, and Barons de Schimmelmann and de Bulow, with Monsieur Rosencrantz, were disgraced and banished to their estates; after being obliged to quit their employments unpensioned, and without the motives of such an unexpected change being made public."

Other accounts, seemingly worthy of credit, ascribe more naturally to the young Queen the desire at heart to free the King from the influence of his travelling associates; of Count Holke especially, whom she is said to have regarded, and justly, as her greatest enemy. That she possessed at this period, however, any authority to achieve a revolution in the royal household, which, unhappily for her, did not include its most influential, though as yet obscure member, there is, not the smallest reason to believe. Count Holke had, however, excited universal jealousy and disgust, even among the companions of his favour, by his overweening authority over his weak sovereign; and it does not appear that his exile, and that of others of the junto, excited in the nation, either regret or dissatisfaction.

The unhappy prominence in a story, with whose tragic *dénouement*, some seventy years ago, "all Europe rang from side to side"—belongs to the too well-known Count Struensee; known, at least by name, to many, with whom the details of his unparalleled career, and the misfortunes in which he involved himself and others, are matters of dim and distant tradition, rather taken for granted than understood. And yet, a page more prolific in striking incidents, more pregnant

with salutary warnings, and more linked, by a sad and melancholy interest, with our own history, can scarcely be found in the records of any country. Never, perhaps, was there an age more requiring than the present, to be reminded, from the experience of the past, that even salutary reforms, when dictated by personal aggrandisement, and urged with indiscreet precipitation, tend only to replunge in anarchy the nation whose steady progress towards improvement they retard; that no degree of talent in statesmen can compensate for the absence of moral or religious principle; and that the meteor rise of political adventurers, from a Struensee to a Napoleon, however rapid and brilliant, has generally set in darkness. And since the star of the individual first named, was, alas! not fated to "shoot madly from its sphere" alone, but to draw down from one far more elevated, a being, fitted, but for him, to be its brightest ornament—it may be well for youth and beauty in high places (the highest, thank Heaven! in Britain needs no such warning) to remember, that indiscretion in those thus conspicuous, is ever visited with the imputation, —if not the penalty of crime; that to brave public opinion, is to draw down its infallible reprobation; and to violate dignity and decorum, a false step which no wrongs can palliate, and no bright qualities redeem.

John Frederick Struensee, who (as one of his biographers quaintly but truly remarks) had the honour and misfortune of being prime minister of Denmark under Christian VII., was born in a safe obscurity, which, especially in a country hitherto exclusively governed by nobles, seemed to promise him exemption from the perils of greatness. His father, though afterwards advanced to a bishopric in Holstein, was a poor but highly respectable country clergyman, whose early lessons of piety (through life unfortunately

disregarded by his son) were gratefully acknowledged in the hour of death, and by whom that son's elevation, so far from being matter to him of pride or exultation, was bitterly deplored. He was born, 5th August, 1737, and received his first education in the celebrated Orphan House of Dr. Franke at Halle; the somewhat ascetic strictness of which * he willingly exchanged at the age of fourteen, for the more congenial liberty of the university of the same city. Ambition and love of pleasure, his two ruling passions, henceforth divided his time and thoughts; though the former had as yet no higher aim than that of qualifying himself by assiduous studies for success in the profession of medicine, which, on leaving the university, he practised with skill and reputation at Altona. So nearly had he chalked out for himself a course of life, the very antipodes of the one in which he became fatally celebrated, that infirm health, an insatiable desire of distinction in his art, and above all, the luxurious gratifications held out by an eastern climate, had determined him on a voyage to India; when (drawn in a contrary direction by the same dominant motives,) the pursuit of a love-intrigue carried him to Copenhagen, where chance recommended him to the notice of the King.

"From his first entering the country," says a sketch, the fidelity of which, as based on his own conversations, and attested by unimpeachable authority, is deserving of all credit, "he had resolved to act a distinguished

* It may be useful to those engaged in the training of youth, to mention, that Struensee ascribed much of the profligacy of his after-life to the criminality attached by his early instructors, to comparative trifles; by which the distinctions of right and wrong were obscured in his mind. They told him that it was a sin to wear powder and ruffles; and observing these fashions, nevertheless, to be generally adopted, he persuaded himself that the moral delinquencies, held up to not much severer reprobation, were equally venial, and as universally practised.

part, and was raised in 1768 to the rank of physician to his Majesty, and in that quality appointed to attend him during his tour in visiting several of the courts of Europe. Being then in the flower of life, possessing an agreeable person and attractive manners, he soon insinuated himself into the good graces of his royal master, and secured that uncommon degree of court-favour which paved the way to all his subsequent preferments.

"He accompanied the King to England, where, in compliment to the official character he held, the University of Oxford conferred on him the honorary degree of Doctor of Medicine. While at Paris he formed an intimacy with Ernevold Brandt, a Dane of good family, who afterwards became the associate of his crimes and his public delinquencies, and a fellow-sufferer with him on the same block." Count Brandt, whose name has thus become inseparably blended with that of Struensee, was of a more elevated extraction. His family, though not noble, was very respectable, originally from Holstein, where his ancestors were established. He possessed many qualities calculated to advance their possessor in a court. His manners were polished, his address easy, and his conversation lively, as well as amusing. Throughout his life, no less than in his death, he manifested personal courage; but in principle and virtue he was totally deficient.

Among the favourites of Christian VII., who were the companions of his pleasures, Brandt occupied a distinguished place; and he was commonly selected from among the crowd of courtiers to make one of the party at the King's private suppers. Having been appointed a gentleman of the bedchamber, he flattered himself that he should be placed on the list of those whom his Danish Majesty named to accompany him on his intended travels. It was not, therefore, without

equal surprise and mortification, that Brandt found his name excluded. He attributed his rejection to the enmity and insinuations of the young Count Holke, who had supplanted him, as he conceived, in his sovereign's favour. Stung with a preference so injurious to his views, Brandt endeavoured to procure the disgrace of Holke, by means of an anonymous letter addressed to the King, accusing the favourite of disaffection. But the attempt proved ruinous to himself; the latter having been soon traced to its real author, Brandt received an order to quit Copenhagen within twenty-four hours. He obeyed, and retired to Paris, where he remained in obscurity as well as indigence. When the King of Denmark arrived at that city, Brandt found means to represent his poverty, and obtained from his master a present of an hundred louis d'or.

Struensee, meanwhile, had accompanied Christian VII. on his travels. He and Brandt meeting at Paris, they formed a sort of compact, by which it was agreed that if Struensee, on his return to Denmark, should attain sufficient credit at court, he would use it to obtain the recall of the other. During the King's stay in France, Struensee had risen to a considerable degree of favour; and his Majesty, soon after his arrival at Copenhagen, presented him to the Queen with his own hand; recommending him at the same time to her as a man of talents, and as peculiarly skilled in the profession of medicine. He was promoted immediately to the place of a privy councillor, and soon became as acceptable to the Queen as he had been to her husband.

Reasons of a very delicate and peculiar nature facilitated his progress in that princess's good opinion. The King and she having been alienated from each other in consequence of his excesses, and having ceased to live together, Struensee undertook to reconcile them, and

succeeded in the attempt. He received every day, from both, new marks of consideration and regard. Together with his friend Brandt, now recalled through his interest from exile, and restored to his former office, he was elevated to the dignity of a count. He now stood forth publicly, the declared and confidential favourite of the King; and within a very short space was constituted first minister, with almost unlimited political power.

This rapid, and altogether unprecedented elevation of a man of obscure birth, and a foreigner,* created, as was to be supposed, feelings of envy and disgust among the courtiers and nobility; who were indignant at the marked preference shown to a stranger, and an upstart. "It was undoubtedly," says a contemporary writer (decidedly favourable to the cause of the young Queen) "an impolitic step in the King to create Doctor Struensee a Count of Denmark, the highest title of nobility in his kingdom; and after having made him the equal to its nobles, to raise him above competition, as his prime minister, with power never delegated before to a Dane. He was revered and esteemed as a physician and a scholar; but when he became the representative of a King, whose person he had surrounded by court sycophants, all Struensee's abilities were exerted to maintain his important post against the batteries of female revenge and perfidy, without attempting to silence his enemies by those masterly strokes which characterise a statesman, and confound all the little devices of the ambitious, forced to admire what it is their interest to satirise and ridicule.†"

"In the important office, however, to which he was so unexpectedly raised," writes another dispassionate narrator, "the Count showed himself to be a man of

* The natives of Holstein were so regarded by the indigenous Danes.

† Memoirs of an Unfortunate Queen.

unquestionable abilities; and far beyond what might have been augured from his habits and inexperience. His powers of application were great; he was rapid and decisive in his resolutions, as well as enlarged and patriotic in his views. Many of his public measures were calculated to improve, and to aggrandise the state over which he presided; although others of them were unadvised, illiberal, and unpopular. Though well-meant, his policy was often ill-judged, and easily misled by insidious adversaries. His impetuosity sometimes impelled him to rash counsels, and reckless legislation; braving prejudices, which greater mildness or prudence would have disarmed, and offending interests that might have been easily reconciled. He irritated the military by disbanding the regiments of guards—a measure which, though professedly founded on economy, weakened his own authority by throwing the satellites of arbitrary power into the ranks of his enemies. He excited the just resentment of the nobility by the suppression of the Privy Council; and by repealing a very ancient law inflicting capital punishment on adultery, he raised against him the clamorous indignation of the people; who regarded this step, and perhaps not without reason, as a mark of his approbation of vice, and an inlet to licentiousness. Some of his improvements, however, were laudable and excellent, and it ought not to be forgotten that he was the first minister of an absolute monarch, that abolished the torture. He interested himself to obtain freedom for the enslaved husbandmen, and granted to all religious denominations the free exercise of their worship. He erected a royal hospital for veteran and invalid soldiers, encouraged agriculture, commerce, and manufactures, and exempted from censure all literary productions."

These measures, however far in advance of his age

and country, were unquestionably of a nature to challenge for their author the respect of posterity, had his moral character not been "far more exceptionable than his political; and his private licentiousness the secret spring of several legislative measures, which were not only disgraceful and odious in themselves, but the forerunner of that indignation and infamy which at last overwhelmed him, and terminated his eventful and infatuated career. Profligacy and ambition were the rocks on which he split. In a court immersed in dissipation and criminal pleasures of every kind, he stood forth the avowed patron, and guilty partaker, of every fashionable vice. At masked balls, and other foreign amusements of that sort, then first introduced into the Danish metropolis, he was the gay leader and infatuated promoter of whatever tended to foster or encourage the dark artifices of gallantry and intrigue."* Infatuated indeed! may we exclaim, who know that it was the opportunity afforded by one of these scenes of novel dissipation, which was successfully embraced to hurl from his "bad eminence" their reckless introducer!

"In his disposition," pursues the same writer, "he was generous, frank, and without hypocrisy; but deficient in that profound judgment, that unwearied vigilance, and political sagacity which were necessary for maintaining him in his precarious elevation. These deficiencies became more and more apparent in proportion as the difficulties of his situation increased. Towards the close of his ministry, when his enemies were become numerous, powerful, and implacable, his strength and presence of mind seemed to have forsaken

* Author of the abridged Life of Struensee in the "Lives of Eminent Converts."

him, and his conduct in many instances, betrayed a strange absence of all foresight or address."

Perhaps it might have been deemed more strange still—more foreign to the recognised weakness of human nature, had the possession of unlimited power, and the boundless favour of two sovereigns, (united upon no other point), failed to intoxicate, and blind to the precipice on which he stood, a quondam physician of five-and-thirty; whom five short years before had seen, editing a newspaper for bread, and meditating, in the hope of some favourable chance in his profession, expatriation across the globe! To what save his own merits, real or supposed, (or a star which defied change), could this minion of fortune ascribe an elevation, beyond his wildest dreams; crowned, too, as it unhappily was, with the confidential intimacy, and too favourable consideration, of an amiable and accomplished Queen?

For this intimacy, and this consideration, there were not wanting, at its commencement, natural and abundant reasons. At the period of the King's return from his travels, the situation of his unfortunate consort, (a beautiful and admired woman be it remembered, little more than nineteen), is thus described:—

"The attachment of the King, if ever it deserved the name, thus alienated, partly in consequence of his own excesses, and partly from the rival jealousies of court parasites, had subsided from cold formality into cruel disrespect. He did not treat her even with common civility; and allowed her to be publicly insulted, in her own palace, by the Russian minister at Copenhagen. His resentment fell on all who were guilty of taking her part; and his favourite cousin, the Prince of Hesse, was disgraced for no other crime."

"Such was the condition of this neglected and ill-fated Queen when Struensee entered on his adminis-

tration. By his insinuating address he soon gained her confidence, and from pity or gallantry, took an interest in her sufferings. His influence over the listless monarch was the means of restoring her to his good graces; although this desirable reconciliation proved the harbinger of his own ruin, by furnishing his enemies with plausible reasons of attack."

Whoever dispassionately considers that this reconciliation, however little "desirable" in itself, and fatal, perhaps, in its consequences to both, was entirely due to Struensee; and elevated for a time the princess whom his chivalry had befriended, from the most abject state of neglect and contumely, to her legitimate influence with her husband, and a triumph which could not fail to be dear to woman's heart, over her relentless persecutors, will not be tempted to wonder, that female gratitude should assume the guise of overweening partiality; and that, towards the only man, perhaps, at the Court of Denmark, by whom her accomplishments were appreciated, or her character understood. One too, presented to her as a talented adviser, by the very hand of her reconciled husband, who never, whether from increasing apathy, or confidence in his wife's virtue, betrayed the smallest jealousy or disapprobation of their intercourse; with whom she was accustomed to hold frequent consultations on the health of her beloved little son; and who excelled, unfortunately for the peace and reputation of both, in the lighter exercises of riding and dancing, in which a young creature of twenty, (for she was no more), might be pardoned for indulging.

But innocent in themselves as were the latter recreations, and natural, nay, praiseworthy, as was the former sentiment, there was much in the modes of enjoying the one, and manifesting the other, which, while it afforded a cruel scope for the insinuations, nay, calum-

nies, of indignant enemies, gave rise in many a friendly bosom, at the time, and long years after, to regrets that a princess, so highly gifted and essentially amiable, should have suffered the polluted atmosphere she had early and fatally breathed, so far to blunt the inherent delicacy of an Englishwoman, as not only to ride in well nigh masculine attire, (a fashion not unexampled in some northern countries,) attended by the Count, and to dance with him whole evenings together,* but to permit him to assume towards her, in public, an ostentation of intimacy, such as, even if proceeding from the recklessness of conscious innocence, was, at least, a violation of dignity and decorum, in which no "wife of Cæsar" could with impunity indulge.

"When Queen Matilda rode out a hunting, her attire too much resembled a man's. Her hair was pinned up closer than usual; she wore a dove-coloured beaver hat, with a gold band and tassels; a long scarlet coat, a frilled shirt, and a man's cravat, while from beneath the coat was said to peep a more unfeminine appendage still, too much in keeping with the terminating spurs. That she made a noble figure, mounted on a majestic steed, and dashing through the woods after the chase, her cheeks flushed with health and violent exercise, may readily be conceded."

"Queen Matilda," says another authority, "was a resolute and fearless horsewoman; of this she gave a decided though indiscreet proof within three days of the birth of her daughter, the Princess Louisa, on the 4th of July, 1771, when, being out on horseback, the horse plunged and kicked, and backed into a dry ditch,

* The stately and measured dances of the period, however, be it remembered, and not the less dignified and more exciting ones of modern times. "Her Majesty," it is said by a cotemporary, "walked the first minuet at the Court of Denmark."

while the Queen, sitting firm and undismayed, flogged and spurred the restive animal till she conquered, and rode home unhurt."

It was probably to enhance this command over her horse, and to indulge with more convenience and security her passion for hunting, adopted originally to counteract a tendency to *embonpoint*, that, in an evil hour for her happiness and reputation, Carolina Matilda assumed the unfortunate garb on horseback, which, though common among the farmers' wives and daughters, was hitherto unprecedented in a higher grade, and gave great and general offence. "Indeed," says the same writer, "her unfeminine appearance,* thus attired for the chase, did her, perhaps, more injury in public opinion, among the elegant and cultivated of her own sex, than her indiscreet preference for the society of the companion of her rides; a proof that, in an age of artificial delicacy, a supposed want of morals may sooner hope for pardon than a failure in decorum."

Gladly do we pause before entering on more harrowing details, and as a contrast to the unbecoming costume above alluded to, to bring before the eyes of the reader—as an almost identical original† has, during a lifetime, familiarised to the writer of these pages the lineaments of their royal subject—the following description, from a Danish novel, of the pictures preserved in Denmark of their now endeared and lamented Queen :—

* That it found imitators, however, even among the censors, appears from a passage in a letter of Colonel Keith. "*An abominable riding habit*, with a black slouched hat, has been *almost universally introduced here;* which gives every woman the air of an awkward *postilion*. In all the time I have been in Denmark, I never saw the queen *out* in any other garb."

† Presented by the royal victim, after her exile, to Sir R. M. Keith, the British minister, to whom she owed her rescue. The execution is indifferent, owing, probably, to the inferiority of the artist.

"Over a marble table hung a portrait in a broad gilt frame. It represented a lady in a dress of bluish satin, embroidered with gold, and edged with lace; the sleeves and puffs over the full bosom being of brownish brocade. Round her neck was a closely strung necklace of pearls, and similar rings were in the ears. The hair was turned up and powdered: it occupied a height and breadth which, agreeably to the fashion of the times, exceeded that of the whole face, and was decorated with a gold chain, enamels, and jewels, entwined with a border of blonde, which hung down over one ear. The face was oval, the forehead high and arched; the nose delicately curved, the mouth pretty large, the lips red and swelling; the eyes large and of a peculiarly light-blue, mild, and at the same time *serious, deep,* and *confiding.* I could describe the entire dress, piece by piece, and the features *trait by trait;* but in vain should I endeavour to convey an idea of the peculiar expression, the amiable loftiness, or lofty amiableness, which beamed from that youthful face, the freshness of whose colour I have never seen surpassed. It needed not to cast your eye upon the purple mantle, bordered with ermine, which hung carelessly over the shoulder, to discover in her a queen! She could be nothing of inferior rank. This the painter, too, had felt, for the border of the mantle was so narrow as almost to be overlooked. It was as though he meant to say, 'This woman would be a queen without a throne!'

"A higher title was conferred on his long dead mistress by an old Court Chamberlain, who, looking on the picture, said—'That was an angel!'"

Thus wrote, a number of years ago, and while many (like the Court Chamberlain above alluded to) survived to verify his accuracy, the Danish author of a book,

professedly entitled "Old Recollections;"* which created, at the period of its appearance, "considerable sensation in Denmark, where," adds the correspondent who thus mentions it, "the Danes still cling with affectionate regard to the memory of the lovely being thus portrayed."

Who, indeed, can contemplate the picture of softened majesty, and winning grace, which pen and pencil have combined to hand down to us, and not cling to the cheering conviction, that the blots which cast their invidious shade over so fair a specimen of humanity, must owe the chief part of their depth to the rancour of envy, and envenomed virulence of faction? And while they have been atoned for by sufferings, more than adequate to their full expiation—their utter want of keeping and harmony with the gentle and reserved character ascribed to Carolina Matilda by some Danish historians, and still more with the qualities which dignified her life, and hallowed her death, at Zell—must ever incline us to view with charitable distrust, that "scandal about Queens," (whether yclept Elizabeth or Matilda) which that chief of gossips, History, is so apt to keep fast hold of, and hand down, when more valuable matter floats unheeded on the stream.

There was, perhaps, no Court in Europe where more respect was shown to foreign ministers, or their convenience more studied than in Denmark. At Hirschholm,† two days in the week, they dined at the King's or rather the *Queen's* table. On their return from the drawing-room to their respective apartments, they found a ticket on their dressing table, specifying where they were to dine; some at the King's table, others

* The one translated into German, as "Christian VII.," and in English as the "Queen of Denmark.

† Literally the Isle of Stags, a country palace, some miles from the capital.

at the Lord Chamberlain's, in the chamber called the Rose.

The usual number that sat down to dinner at the King's table was twelve; alternately five ladies and seven gentlemen, seven ladies and five gentlemen. The King cut a wretched figure on these occasions; not so the Queen, who dressed very superbly, and made a noble and splendid appearance. The King and Queen were served on gold plate by noble pages; the marshal of the palace sat at the foot of the table, the chief lady of the household at the head: the company, a lady and gentleman alternately, opposite to the King and Queen.

A table of eighty covers was provided every day in the Rose, for the great officers of state, who were served on silver plate: at this table Struensee, Brandt, with their friends and favourites, male and female, used to dine.

Of the palace where these costly banquetings were daily carried on, we possess two various descriptions written at the interval of perhaps a dozen years, and so characteristic in their contrast, of the vicissitudes in the fate of their royal mistress, that a part of both may be given here. At the period of the festivities just alluded to, and when "all went merry as a marriage-bell" with the actors in them, the splendors of Hirschholm are thus portrayed:—

"Each period and taste in building might find its type among the palaces of Denmark; but the representative of that culminating point of luxury and magnificence, the Siècle de Louis Quatorze, was to be found at Hirschholm. Adorned externally with all the newest French refinements in gardening and pleasure-grounds, it dazzled the eye within, by the profusion of solid silver, intermingled with mother of pearl, and rock

crystal; with which not only pictures and looking-glasses, but even the very pannels of the audience chamber were prodigally encircled." Such was it in 1772.

Coxe, writing in 1784, says, "The suite of apartments at Hirschholm is princely, but deserted and without furniture; not having been inhabited since the exile of Queen Carolina Matilda, who made it her favourite residence. The place is so entirely neglected, that the court-yard is overrun with weeds, and the moat a green-mantled pool."

A later writer still, speaks of the palace itself as having vanished; and its site being occupied (as if by way of monument to past splendours) by a little unadorned village church.

Whilst Struensee was lord of the ascendant, the King was held in a sort of liberal restraint, debarred from the society and intercourse of every one, save those placed about him by the minister.* Yet during all this time he dined in public with the Queen, accompanied her in the field sports, to which she became so much addicted, appeared at the French and Italian operas, danced at their balls, and took a share in their card parties; but little if any attention was paid to what he said, except so far as his wants were concerned; and all the subaltern attendants and domestic servants had orders never to speak to the King.

One Sunday, coming from the royal chapel, the King turned the wrong way, and lost himself in the vast passages of his enormous palace; seeing Struensee's

* This restriction, the result, of course, of jealous caution, extended, it will be seen, to the person of the British minister; who wishing to convey in a familiar letter the king's character and state of mind, to his sister, applied, (under a feigned name), the expressive Scotch terms of "*catwitted*" and "*cowed*" to the unhappy monarch.

valet, he asked him in a mild and melancholy tone, to show him the way to his apartment. This person, a young, handsome, gay Norwegian, and a favourite and humble confidant of his master, respectfully, but in profound silence, complied with the monarch's request, and led him to his magnificent prison.

The same despotic restrictions are said to have existed with regard to the infant Crown Prince; and tales of arbitrary imprisonment for having merely picked him up when he had fallen, were studiously circulated by the enemies of the Queen and Struensee. That the latter had become an object of aversion to the child (no doubt from persons having, in spite of all precautions, taught him to dislike and despise one whom he persisted in calling not "Count" or "Excellency," but the "nasty Doctor,") rests on the same popular authority: and, if true, would afford sufficient ground for the care taken to isolate him from such communications. But a worthier reason may be found in the truly excellent, and at that time rare system of education, which was adopted at the avowed suggestion of Struensee, by the Queen; and acted upon with a firmness which—however misrepresented into severity by the malice of cruel foes—must have cost so tender a parent the most commendable effort. The moral training—so rare in the case of an heir-apparent,—is thus described; and to its early influence may perhaps be ascribed, at least in some degree, the mixture of moderation and self-restraint with the firm assertion of his just rights, which distinguished the youthful monarch, at a future, though still boyish period.

"Under Struensee's directions, the young prince was treated in a very hardy manner. A companion was assigned him, a soldier's child, whose name was

Edward. This boy too was called a *prince*; he was dressed in the same plain uniform as the Crown Prince, ate of the same dish with him, and slept on the same mattress. This experiment was made with a view to repress, in his earliest years, those exalted notions of self-importance, and aversion to self-control, that had proved so fatal to his unhappy father; and it seems to have answered its intended object, as our present beloved King is universally acknowledged as the least haughty or assuming of sovereigns." *

This pair of little men, the pseudo and born prince, frequently contended for mastery. One day, when they had fought with greater fury than usual, Frederick asked Edward how he dared to raise his hand against *his* prince? "A prince," replied the other,—"I am a prince as well as you." "Yes, but I am *Crown* Prince," rejoined Frederick, and fell upon him again, after he had owned himself conquered. Matilda, hearing of this, had the little urchin sent for to her apartment, as well as his companion, insisting that he should beg pardon of Edward. Frederick refused to submit to her award, and the Queen, provoked by his stubbornness, beat him severely: he was conquered, but not subdued.

That by these "*severities*," doubtless little practised in royal nurseries, Matilda *alienated* the affections of her boy, is utterly disproved by the tender fondness with which, through life,† he clung to her memory.

* This account is taken from a Danish MS. Since these pages were written, two monarchs, subsequently to the one so justly praised, have ascended the Danish throne.

† Towards the close of his long reign, chance having thrown the writer of these pages into the company of a Danish *savant*, travelling at the expense of the king, with whom he was in close correspondence; he exclaimed on hearing the name of '*Keith*,' "I must write of this meeting to my *good king before I sleep*, he will be *so happy!*"

Nor would any mother, in our more enlightened days of maternal discipline, shrink from the inferences, founded by ignorance or malice on the circumstance, that when *very unruly*, it was sufficient to threaten to *take him to the Queen.* The well-meaning, though ill-judging writer, who repeats this gossip, candidly subjoins to it—"The probability is, that to the system thus introduced, this prince is indebted for the strength he afterwards acquired: as previously, he was a weakly puny child; very cross and humoursome, continually crying; would not walk, but cried till he was carried, so that at two years old, his attendants, to make him quiet, used to tell him—'Your mama shall come to you.'"

"To obviate these hindrances to the development of his health and intellects, Struensee, with the approbation of the Queen, made a total change in the child's regimen. His food thenceforth was of the most plain and simple description, such as bread, rice, fruits, milk, and vegetables, all cold; he was bathed in cold water two or three times each week, till at last he would go of himself to the bath. The boys were very lightly clad, and last winter had neither shoes, stockings, nor fire in their room. The Crown Prince and his comrade played together; in dressing and eating, they assisted each other, and the apartment being free from anything by which they could injure themselves, if they fell, there they lay, till they got up by their own exertions, no one showing any concern.

"After the introduction of this system, the Crown Prince was seldom ill; he had the small-pox from inoculation slightly, and also the measles. His education was to commence in his sixth year, prior to which, he was left to the effects of his experience, temperate diet and exercise. He had acquired as much knowledge as could be expected from his tender years,

his health was improved, his temper and bad habits corrected; and the utmost care was taken that his infant mind should not be inflated with vanity by adulation. It redounds to the honour of Struensee, that his enemies actually made this admirable system a capital charge against him, as endangering not only the health, but life of the prince."

The political features of this ominous period of nominal resumption of authority by the King, and its uncontrolled exercise by the dominant party, are thus characterised by a contemporary writer:—

"The young Queen endeavoured, during this interval of Christian's assuming the reins of government, to prevent the baneful effects of Juliana's designs, by forming a new Court of creatures, mostly strangers, without fortune, credit or alliances in the state; intriguing without being politicians, assuming in prosperity, and relying too much on a transient power, unsupported by family connections, and envied by the late discarded favourites as well as by those who pleaded a noble Danish extraction, for the preference they claimed against those new men, whose talents, inadequate to public administration, gave too much room for their adversaries' complaints and animadversions."*

By one ambitious individual among these, was the favourite minister's influence viewed with rising, though secret, jealousy and displeasure. And it forms one of the not least ominous features, in an unparalleled series of events, that Struensee should have been originally placed near the King as a spy on a former obnoxious minion, by the man, afterwards destined to be the chief agent in his ruin, and that of the unfortunate Carolina Matilda.

Count Charles Shack Rantzau, Governor of Gluck-

* Memoirs of an unfortunate Queen.

stadt, a general in the army, a Knight of the Order of the Elephant, the head of one of the most powerful families under the Danish crown, has, like all the chief actors in extensive revolutions, been characterised by the various parties, with a discrepancy of opinion, which must baffle the efforts of distant posterity to arrive at a just conclusion. But however his motives, and the actions to which they led, may have given rise to even opposite representations, on the main points of his character all are agreed. Handsome in person, generous to profusion, a brave officer, (though his courage had chiefly displayed itself in the unenviable notoriety of duelling), and an accomplished courtier, he was in morals utterly dissolute; and his political principles—if such they may be called—partook so largely of the mingled astuteness and versatility of those ascribed to the prince of diplomatists, Talleyrand, that a piece (entitled *Bertrand et Raton*)—in which the treacheries and tergiversations of the latter were satirised under the name of the former dabbler in revolutions, drew all Paris to the theatre, during an unprecedented run of an hundred and sixty successive nights.

We say "dabblers in *revolutions*," because Count Rantzau had in earlier life gained unenviable notoriety by his participation in that which placed Catherine of Russia on the throne; and it was singular that the same man who, it is said, by betraying the unhappy Peter the Third, assisted her design of getting rid of one imbecile husband, should, by the instrumentality of another, accomplish the ruin of a princess far more deserving than she whose ambition he served.*

* In a letter to his father, Sir R. Keith indirectly corroborates this, by saying of Count Rantzau, soon after his arrival at Copenhagen, "He claims acquaintance with you at Petersburgh; but this does not shield him from the unmitigated contempt I owe him."

Count Rantzau, it is asserted in the accounts most favourable to his original motives and character, had been the intimate friend and chosen confidant of the late King Frederick V.; and aware of the probable machinations of Juliana Maria, had promised her dying husband, on his honour and oath, never to desert his favourite boy, Christian. It is, therefore, allowable to presume that he might feel, and exercise, a disinterested solicitude to fulfil this sacred trust, in his first efforts to rescue from the influence of the minions by whom he was surrounded, his degraded monarch. That personal ambition, and hopes of future elevation to political power through his means, had their share in his choice of Struensee to be about the King's person, there can, however, be not the shadow of a doubt; while the bloody termination of a connection, founded on congenial laxity of morals and principle, connected by interest and dissolved at the bidding of self-aggrandisement, reads an impressive lesson to all, who, in "sowing the wind" of mere political combinations for selfish purposes, may expect to "reap the whirlwind" of perfidy, desertion, and disgrace.

"Not long after the wasteful and impolitic tour to England, France, &c., the Court went on a journey to Holstein and Sleswick, during which the King and Queen paid a visit to Count Rantzau at his principal country residence, Aschberg.* The mansion was neither

* The family of Rantzau was one of the most distinguished in Holstein, not only for the antiquity and extent of their possessions, but for the number of warriors and statesmen it produced. The gardens at Aschberg were as much celebrated in that country as those of Stowe in England. In the centre was a conical hill, perhaps an ancient tumulus, round which a spiral walk led to the summit. The mount was planted with *ash trees;* and '*berg*' signifying a mountain, the name of the estate was probably derived from this mount, where there was a fine view over a lake, eight miles in breadth, diversified by woody islands

very large nor magnificent. The old edifice was much in the style of gentlemen's houses in England of the seventeenth century; the new house, as it was called, was connected with the ancient structure, and consisted of a suite of four tolerable rooms on the ground floor, and as many above. This building was allotted to the King and Queen, and their principal courtiers, as Brandt, Struensee, &c."

It was the opportunities that this Holstein journey, and the residence of the Court at his house, afforded to the Count, of observing the conduct of Struensee and the Queen, that convinced him he had introduced an agent who would soon tower high above himself, and probably kick down the ladder by which he had been raised. His suspicions once awakened, his fears were confirmed to an extent which eradicated every feeling of friendship towards Struensee, and in its place implanted those deadly emotions of jealousy and hatred which, at no very distant day, led to the destruction of their incautious object.

During the residence of the Court at the Count's mansion, he one day found means, in spite of the vigilance of Brandt and Struensee, to obtain an hour's conversation with the King. Count Rantzau knew his weakness too well to commit himself in any way; all he wished was to ascertain the state of the King's mind, who, pleased with the puerile amusements that were provided, seemed perfectly indifferent to everything else. Rantzau gazed on the debilitated being before him, with looks fraught with more meaning than words, and a tear trickled down his furrowed cheek. The King

and picturesque shores. At a small distance stood a tolerable inn, where the domestics of the King and his nobles were lodged; and which in summer was generally full of company from Hamburgh, &c., who were attracted by the beauties of Aschberg.

seemed affected; for a moment the former sensibility and vivacity of his character illumined his dimmed eye and pallid cheek. He seized the Count by the hand and said, "You were a true friend to my father, you will never be an enemy to me." "Never, sire! never will I hesitate to sacrifice my life in your defence!" Then, falling on one knee, he drew an antique ring from his finger and put it on the King's, saying, in a solemn manner, "This ring, sire, was given me by your royal father when I returned from Russia, and when, by fortunate exertions there, I was the humble means of averting invasion from his kingdom. If ever your majesty thinks yourself in danger, and you want the assistance of Rantzau, send this ring to me, and I will fly on the wings of affection and loyalty to your aid."

Rantzau had scarcely wiped the falling tear away, ere the King, hearing footsteps approach, fell off at once into his idiotic state, and running to a canine friend of his that was basking in the sun, took him round the neck, hugging him with ardour, and calling him his faithful guard. This uncommon dog was liver-coloured, of prodigious might and size; his broad chest showed all the strength of the English mastiff; his form the elegance of the greyhound. Such was the King's favourite dog, called *Gourmand*. Gourmand had a carriage for his sole use when the King travelled, and a lacquey to attend him. He was served with food from the King's table, and by his royal master's hand. In the midst of royal etiquette, Gourmand alone acted without restraint, though generally with distinguished decorum. He would, when he pleased, stretch his finely-formed limbs on the same rich sofa where his master reclined, and then no one durst approach till he awoke. He was playful, docile, and *incorruptibly* faithful

to his master; the only one of all the King's attendants, of whom so much might be said with any regard to historical truth. The partisans of Queen Juliana, in derision of Struensee's new-born honours, dubbed this four-legged favourite of their sovereign, "Monsieur Gourmand, *Conferentie Raad*" (privy councillor) to the King, and, as if to confirm his title to the epithet, the faithful animal (who, it was said, had once leaped on and seized an intended assassin) was involved in the fall of Struensee, and after that event removed from the King and returned to the nobleman by whom he had been originally presented.

The above anecdote, which, without vouching for its authenticity, is, like many similar ones, given on the authority of an anonymous Danish MS. of the period, quoted in a work entitled "Brown's Northern Courts," derives confirmation, in so far as the imbecile monarch's sudden change of demeanour goes, from the observations of a lady of rank who visited the Danish Court in the year 1796, twenty-four years after the events just narrated. She thus writes:—

"Although incapable of governing when I visited Copenhagen, Christian VII. had frequent lucid intervals, and even held Courts occasionally; for the Crown Prince, who was then Regent, paid every attention which filial affection could dictate, to the wants and wishes of his parent. I had the honour of being present at one of these levées, and was much struck by the venerable appearance of the monarch, as well as the marked homage and respect with which he was treated by the whole Court. The return of his malady evinced itself in a singular manner. While in the midst of the most cheerful conversation, and when, apparently, quite collected, he would suddenly run across the apartment, and salute the first person he met with

a violent slap on the face; so that it was necessary for the courtiers and ministers (for he made no distinction of rank or person) to be constantly on their guard."

To return to the narration of occurrences at Aschberg, and the mute appeal of the poor King to his canine guardian, whence Rantzau drew the inference that he apprehended some impending danger, "it would be difficult," says the writer before quoted, "to conceive a more distressing spectacle than that presented to a contemplative mind, in the wreck of this gay young monarch, now become an object of fixed aversion to his wife, and of secret scorn to his own menials. Enfeebled as he was in mind and body, he had yet sufficient consciousness to feel at intervals all the misery of his degraded condition; though he wanted resolution of mind to quit those disgraceful excesses by which it was produced.

"During the stay of the Court at Aschberg, Count Rantzau spared no pains or expense to render his abode agreeable to the young Queen. Each day had its peculiar festivities and amusements, music, hunting, fishing, sailing on the lake, and rustic sports, which, more than any pastime, pleased the imbecile King.*

"The Queen, fully satisfied with the magnificence and respect with which Count Rantzau had entertained her, little dreaming of the share which her attentive host was to have in her approaching fall, gave him a

* Of the scale and splendour of these entertainments some idea may be formed from the account of the parting one, which, when a disgraced courtier, and about to become a voluntary exile, the Count gave on the same estate. After conferring on his vassals some really valuable privileges, he "invited them to his castle, and gave them such a substantial feast as the English Barons of old are said to have displayed. Tents and marquees were provided for the accommodation of the higher classes; a rustic fair was held, that was crowded with bands of music, players, and venders of all sorts of bagatelles."

superb snuff-box, richly set with brilliants, that had cost her husband a thousand guineas, in London.* Count Rantzau followed the Court in its progress; in his mind he anticipated, more than all, the sad results which flowed from the imprudence of Matilda and Struensee; but keeping these thoughts to himself, and his countenance open, he eluded the vigilance of Struensee, Brandt, and even the lynx-eyed Madame G——. All the party, Rantzau excepted, were young, or in the prime of life; they were all willing slaves of dissipation; hence it is no wonder that an old experienced courtier, who felt himself thrown out by the instrument he had chosen to forward his own ambitious views, his discernment sharpened by jealousy, and desire of revenge, should be enabled to out-general the giddy, gay, and wanton train who filled the groves with music, love, revelry, and song."

"A young and amiable woman," says Wraxall, "speaking of this unfortunate period, "who saw herself neglected by a dissolute and imbecile husband, while at the same time she was an object of respect and homage to every other person who approached her, could scarcely be supposed altogether to escape the contagion of so tainted an atmosphere; though, previous to the King's journey, she had so conducted herself, as if not wholly to escape detraction, yet to preserve a great share of general affection and popularity."

There seems, however, in this temporary forgetfulness of propriety, and torrent of dissipation, something so utterly at variance, both with what is above admitted, and elsewhere recorded, of her previous blameless retirement, and the rational and dignified tenor of the life amid

* The costliness of this gift to an ordinary courtier may counteract any unfavourable inferences which might arise from presents of corresponding value to Struensee.

which (as in her native element) the latter days of the still youthful Queen serenely glided away, that, in her case, we must seek for its maddening cause in that sudden transition from neglect to devotion—that brief, giddy elevation to the summit of power—which, as owing to, and shared with, the triumphant minister, Carolina Matilda perhaps thought she could not sufficiently appreciate and reward.

Advantage was in the meantime taken of Struensee's glaring immoralities and growing unpopularity, to cast a shade of suspicion (wholly unfounded, and soon rejected as groundless by all save, perhaps, its calumnious authors) on the auspicious birth of a little princess, named Louisa Augusta,* the devoted attachment to whom, and affectionate discharge towards her of a mother's tenderest offices, forms a beautiful feature in the character of her unhappy parent.† At the same time, and based on the same want of principle on the part of the minister, reports were circulated, ascribing to his insidious arts, or a still more nefarious exercise of his medical functions, an increased degree of languor and imbecility, into which the young monarch suddenly fell; to which cause were ascribed the scandalous irregularities which exposed him to the contempt of his subjects, and rendered him passive with respect to the pretended excesses of the Queen, and the crimes of her creatures.

These, and similar insinuations, propagated with the utmost activity of malice, made the desired impression

* Whose daughter, when these pages were written, was the amiable and beloved Queen-Consort of Denmark.

† It affords not a less striking proof of the groundlessness of the insinuation itself than of the dissimulation of its authors, that the sponsors on this occasion were the Queen Dowager and her son Prince Frederick; while the unhesitating admission, ever since, (by a people naturally jealous on such matters) of the legitimacy of their beloved princess, seems sufficient refutation of her mother's alleged guilt.

on the military and burghers; and, favoured by the indiscretion of the young Queen, and the fatal security of the haughty favourite, sealed the fate of both.

Juliana's court became the resort of discontented nobles, ecclesiastics, and officers, who, adopting implicitly her vindictive projects, prejudiced the nation against the measures of what they called a *German** junto, composed of upstarts suddenly emerged from obscurity, who sacrificed the national honour and interest to the desire of aggrandising themselves by plundering the state, and accumulating to their indigent families a rapid fortune by the most scandalous exactions.

That there was good foundation for the latter accusation, the subsequent state trials brought to light; the discontent of the nobles and military has been already accounted for; and the clergy found ample justification of their invectives, in the avowed infidelity, as well as profligacy of the reigning minister.†

It was while occupied in a constant succession of courtly amusements, that seemed to leave nothing to apprehend, and while precaution was strangely laid asleep, that Struensee rushed forward, as blindly as his most inveterate enemies could desire, on impending destruction. And yet warnings had not been wanting to recall him to a sense of his precarious situation. Even his own thoughtless colleague Brandt, (whom all

* Chiefly natives of Holstein, thus characterised and regarded by Danes of insular extraction ; a jealousy revived in the present day.

† It is a singular, and, by well-constituted minds, will be hailed as a double proof of the omnipotence of Christian feeling and Christian truth, that the same eminent Divine who, in the exercise of his official functions as one of the pastors of the capital, had been called upon to uplift his protest against the doctrinal errors and moral delinquencies countenanced by Struensee, devoted weeks of patient and skilful argumentation to his conversion after his fall, and reaped his reward in perhaps the most satisfactory and complete case of religious conviction upon record.

unite in designating a "shallow courtier, vain, dissolute, and wholly deficient in virtue and principle,") is said to have perceived, and pointed out, the precariousness of their joint situation. And the counsels of a man of widely differing weight and character, the British minister, might, if timely listened to, have averted his doom. For this we have the authority of an eminent Danish writer, Dr Höst, who, in his valuable work entitled "John Frederick Struensee and his Ministry," published in 1824, thus expresses himself in speaking of Sir Robert Murray Keith:—

"This sensible and worthy man could not but be uneasy as to the influence which the danger that hovered over Struensee might have on the destiny of the Queen. He urged the Count to remove from the Court; but the latter, although aware of the danger, could not tear himself away."

Colonel Keith, who perhaps fortunately for a daughter of England, as well as for his own reputation and subsequent advancement, at that critical moment, held the post of Minister of Great Britain at the Court of Denmark, afforded, like his equally talented father, a proof that to achieve success in diplomacy, it is not indispensable to pass through the preliminary steps of office. Had diplomacy been the original bent of this son's disposition, his father's eminence might have opened to him the most favourable field. But, like most young men of his age and country, we have seen that he early chose the profession of arms; and after earning distinction in the fields of fame, under the gallant Prince Ferdinand, in the wars of Germany, it was only the reduction, at their close, of his brave band of Highlanders, which led to his entrance, with even less of preparation than his father had enjoyed, on a long diplomatic career.

Its commencement at Dresden afforded little to call forth the energies of a powerful mind. Yet it was with regret that he exchanged agreeable domestication, in a small, but delightful royal circle (whose friendship and correspondence he long enjoyed) for the stormy and critical,* though honourable, post of Minister to Denmark; at a period in the annals, both of that kingdom itself and of its unhappy Queen, the difficulties of which our previous narration will enable the least reflecting to comprehend.

The spirit in which it was entered upon, and in which these difficulties were encountered, will best be gathered from the first of those extracts from the minister's private correspondence, which (penned on the spot, from day to day, during the various stages of a most painful and eventful mission), while they enable the writer of these pages to discharge a sacred duty to the memory of an able negotiator and good man, will, by their graphic truth, and the varying emotions they record, give the liveliest idea of the perilous state of affairs in Denmark, and the position there of an ambassador from Britain.

Soon after his arrival, in June, 1771 (six months previous to the catastrophe), Colonel Keith thus writes to his father (who survived his son's appointment by three years) :—

"The first step to render my mission useful to the King's service, is to establish my reputation as a man who is above all trick or low intrigue, and who will never interfere when he can do no good. I have it sincerely at heart to deserve the public and private esteem, and I have the strongest encouragement to go

* Not the less so from dissatisfaction previously experienced (says the Editor of Malmesbury's Life) with his predecessor's conduct amid its troubles.

on cheerfully, by the many kind expressions which have been made use of, with regard to my mission, by the *highest powers* at home. They have been repeatedly echoed to me, by Bentinck, Yorke, and from various friendly quarters; but I own that my pride was unexpectedly flattered by the very honourable testimony of the Duke D'Auguillon to the French minister here, in instructions designed for himself alone.

"How far I may be able to fulfil the expectations of friend or foe, I will not pretend to determine; but certainly, I am less sanguine on the subject than the one or the other. Politicians by profession have very little chance here, where they are, at present, admitted to *no share* of the business. The nonsense of etiquette has already thrown a stumbling-block in my way, by a new, (and, I believe, unprecedented) regulation with respect to *private audiences*.* But as I have preserved all possible respect towards this Court, and made my report with fairness and temper to my own, I can be under no uneasiness with regard to my share in this innovation and its consequences. A shut or an open door (for that is the point) is a subject to be canvassed by the higher powers; my duty is to wait for instructions, and to adhere to them quietly. In the meantime, I heartily consign that old harridan Etiquette, with all her trumpery, to the lowest underling of all possible devils! Count Osten† has met me with the greatest personal civilities; he mentions your name always with strong professions of regard, and repeats with pleasure a variety of little anecdotes which do you honour. His very active parts might perhaps be turned to better advantage than they have hitherto been in this country."

* Evidently dictated by Count Struensee's apprehensions as to the result of *free access*, by the minister of Great Britain, to either the King or *Queen*.

† The Danish minister for foreign affairs.

"*July* 21*st*.

"I have just received answers from my principal to my first official letters; and I cannot enough acknowledge the handsome terms in which those answers are conceived. My first business is to deserve the good opinion thus flatteringly expressed from home, and the public and private esteem here, and then I shall be prepared for whatever circumstances may occur. The rage of being busy is the bane of almost all the disciples of Hugo Grotius; but I hope I am sufficiently guarded against it, by the fear of doing harm, and the very moderate ambition which attends my personal views. But while matters go on smoothly, and with no shadow of partiality to an adverse interest, I shall be very well pleased, and willing to confess myself a benevolent spectator."

This, his natural character (as all who have read his previous correspondence must admit), circumstances did not permit one so social in disposition, and upright in principle, long to retain. The first invasion of the "*Bonhommie*," "a reputation for which (he writes) I may say, without vanity, had preceded me here," arose from a two months' experience of a lack of hospitality and warmth on the part of the natives, of which mutual distrust, and the state of parties in a kingdom divided by adverse factions, and on the eve of a disastrous convulsion, may have afforded a subsequent solution.

"My situation," he writes in August, "is exactly the same as when I despatched my first letter. An intercourse of an hour, once a week, with the Court—a formal supper once in a fortnight with the fashionable people—make the whole of my public appearances; and, what may form a sure prognostic of the future society, I can safely assure you, that in a residence of two months, I have not been admitted to any one visit that I have made to *man* or *woman*, *Dane* or *Diplomatique*.

The cheerfulness with which I submit to customs which I cannot mend, is a sort of merit which has not passed unnoticed; and I hope the people look upon me as one who does not *pine* alone, and yet is ready to mix in any thing that is sociable. I thank my stars I can live contentedly in the greatest solitude, and I have the experience of Helvoetsluys Barracks in my favour. But I never can give a greater proof than at present of the zeal that I owe to our common benefactor. Whatever may be the success of my endeavours, fortune and *comfort* are here out of the question."

In October he thus writes:—"I am sorry to say that the climate, society, and politics of this kingdom are equally uncomfortable. You may depend on my setting down nought in malice, but I will fairly state to you the particulars of each, and leave you, dear sir, to judge how far my patience is likely to be tried. The little summer I saw, was sultry and languid; August, and almost all September, rotten and rainy; and the few clear days we have had lately, too chilly to be abroad with pleasure. Five months of a dismal and variable winter are now awaiting us, with as little defence against the cold, both of body and spirit, as can well be imagined. After looking round me with an anxious, yet a benevolent eye, for any thing that may be called a society, or even a single friend, male or female, I am forced to own to myself that there is not any hope of succeeding. I do not mean to asperse a whole nation, in which there are undoubtedly many worthy people; but such is the shyness of all those I have seen to each other, and still more to men of my cloth, that meeting them now and then, at dinner, or in a public place, forms not a more intimate connection than that of three or four Dutchmen who have crossed in the same Doit-boat at Rotterdam.

"An inquiry about what you do, and how you pass your time, when absent from these people, never enters their heads, any more than they ever suffer you to enter within their doors. After experiencing what is called a '*distinguished reception,*' which ended in two or three formal dinners to this good hour, I never was admitted to a single visit. The greatest part of the nobility, having lost their employments, are retired from the capital, but by this we are only a few yearly feasts out of pocket; for Le President Ogier (qui faisait la pluie et le beau tems pendant une Ambassade de quatorze ans), could never, as I am assured, acquire a familiar footing in a Danish family. This is a desperate matter."

The constitutional and irrepressible *gaieté de cœur*, the literal *heart cheerfulness* of the writer, finds vent in a playful portrait gallery (too long and personal for entire insertion) of the male and female members of the society, so called, diplomatic and private, whose rare festivities he partook in; for, from the reckless dissipation of the "wags of the Court," (as he styles, in manly contempt, the profligate clique of the minister), he as evidently held himself aloof, as they manifested their dread of his character and influence, by estranging him from everything like personal, or even official, intercourse with the King.

As a welcome relief from much of a graver and deeply painful character, as a proof, not altogether superfluous, in our matter-of-fact age, how nearly allied are wit and wisdom, nay, that not incompatible are even politics and playfulness, we cannot resist a few further extracts from those family *épanchemens de cœur*, in which, during the earlier and less anxious periods of his sojourn, the ambassador sought indemnification for his forced isolation, and portrayed its whimsical extent.

"Now," says he in another letter dated October, "for the Matadores among our females! Madame de Blosset, the French minister's lady, is really good-humoured and agreeable. Rich they are, beyond the measure of Frenchmen, (*cent mille livres par an,*) but I got my single dinner from them two months ago, and *word spake never more,* no, not even an afternoon's dish of tea! Madame Haxthausen, the wife of your friend at the head of the Admiralty, (who speaks of you with the highest admiration), a fat, fair, unmeaning lass, looks at me once a month, as if she had an inkling to be kind; but I have had the *fatted calf there* too, and though I could almost converse with her from my window to hers, I must bring a battering-ram if I mean to force open her door.

"There is an Admiral Romeling, who from a man-of-war education, has a warm side to our country folks; but he is out of place, and has little fortune, so that I am kept at a distance from a cheerful dumpling woman his wife, and a tall, comely, lively lass his daughter, who seems to have a fire and vivacity which are seldom found in this climate. A Monsieur and Madame Juel are just come to town, with a sweet little cherubim of a daughter, just fifteen; consequently just the very thing which can be turned to no earthly advantage by a gentleman of my years. These good people curtsied to me very politely at my presentation; and, as they are renowned for hospitality, I have since had the happiness of seeing the *outside of their street door,* which is of strong handsome oak, and painted yellow!

"We have, however, a Madame de Mercières (aunt to my little Dresden Juel, as indeed they *all are*); this lady is the thirty years' spouse of an aged lord, and she (as I am told) feeds all mankind at a kind of refectory table once a week. I think I have a chance of being

among the strangers whom she taketh in; for her porter has smiled most graciously when he has received my cards from the running footman. A good omen this, and I make the most of everything! I have a laughing hoyden of a *vis à vis*, who deplores my solitary situation, and has *womanfully* set aside all fear of scandal, by admitting me, during four months, to above seventy-five *minutes* of giggling conversation, divided into two equal parts, without the presence of a single soul, except her *husband and mother!* However, I am determined not to nip this bud of kindness, and if it produces any tolerable fruit, I shall be proud of the production.

"Our week is now going to be parcelled out in plays and operas, and there will be at least a place of rendezvous every evening. Yet are we starched and demure, even in our playhouses, for every human being has his or her place allotted by the book of *Etiquette*, and *sticks* to it during the whole performance. Those who sit two boxes from me might as well be in *Norway*, for any manner of communication I can have with them. My little *Juel* is within five seats of being as great a lady as Madame de Blosset; and as I squat next to *Madame L'Ambassadrice*, I can, at least twice in an evening, see the tip of my cherub's nose. Were she to marry into the third class of grandees, I should see no more of her during my stay in Denmark! It is really ridiculous to see how the world is parcelled out here into no less than nine classes, six of whom I must never encounter without horror. Yet my opera-glass tells me that numbers eight and nine beat us all hollow as to flesh and blood. But as *Surgeons* become *Counts* and *Prime Ministers* in this island, my buxom *nines* may hereafter be *Court-ladies*, for aught I know."*

* Alluding to the original profession and rise of the then omnipotent *Count Struensee*, to whom this allusion recalls us. The unreserved style

But we must return from this digression to the graver and more indignant strain in which Sir R. Keith describes (which he does in a graphic and strongly drawn series of portraits, coincident in their main features with the concise sketch already given) the rise and character of those extraordinary minions of fortune, by whom the destinies of Denmark, and, alas! those of one nearer and dearer to his heart, as a daughter of England, were at that period swayed. He thus introduces to his confidential circle, the *parvenu premier* :—

"*October 6th*, 1771.

"The Fourth Knight," (of the Order of MATILDA, instituted, alas! to be unhappily disgraced by its chief members), "the founder and artisan of all this stately fabric, the man who unites in his single person all the honours, and *all* the powers of two kingdoms, is Count Struensee; who, from the boldness of his attempt to overthrow not only the ministry, but to expel all the nobility, and change every department in the state, as well as from his complete success in this hazardous undertaking, deserves a better and more expert biographer than I can pretend to be."

After a succinct sketch of the birth and parentage of the *Medico*-minister, whose ambition, he says, was at first supposed, even by the sage Count Bernstorff, (who disdained to crush him, though warned of his determination), "to reach no higher than to rule (like the physician in the Rehearsal) the healths of both their Majesties," Colonel Keith thus proceeds :—

"I have reason to believe, how odd soever it may appear, that from his first admittance into the palace,

and nature of these communications, it may be mentioned, arose from their being written for transmission by a Scotch captain of a vessel then lying wind-bound at Copenhagen.

he laid his plan to be Prime Minister. He began by governing all those of his own sphere, and rendering himself necessary to those of a higher. He was first made *Lecteur du Roi*, and a sort of *Sécrétaire du Cabinet;* then, on the return from England, *Maître des Requêtes*, (an office which meant anything or everything,) and soon after, he called to his assistance the amiable and striking figures I have just now painted, viz., Rantzau, Gähler, and Brandt. He dismissed Count Bernstorff, Rosencrantz, Molke, Thott, in short, every minister and great officer of the Crown. He acquired an irresistible ascendancy over the Throne, he made himself *Chevalier de Mathilde*, and Count of Denmark, and having abolished all ministry and councils, he took to himself the *exclusive* title of *Ministre du Cabinet*, Finances, Army, Navy, *colléges et cuisines;* every branch of power or prerogative rested in him. To consummate all, he procured and published a Royal Sign Manual, declaring, that whatever orders were given by Count Struensee, to the heads or subalterns of every board, or department of Government, should be obeyed *instantly, implicitly*, and without appeal. Thus, indeed, did he rule, in fact, the healths and minds of both ——; but I have said too much upon a subject which gives me real pain for a thousand reasons.

"The politics of this minister are doubtful with regard to foreign nations, but all his professions are in favour of Russia. He will, however, admit of no close intercourse, from the fear of being dictated to; and perhaps he waits to be courted, more than it has hitherto been thought proper to give into. The foreign ministers being the only persons whom he cannot kick and cuff at pleasure, he has effectually debarred them from the least access to the throne; and for that

purpose all private audiences are abolished. He never condescends to mention business to any member of the *corps diplomatique*, and Count Osten, through whom those affairs are transacted, reports to Struensee in writing, and not to the Sovereign; and receives his *dictates*, though not placidly, nor always without grumbling. The Prime Minister is so jealous of the interference of the *corps diplomatique*, that if any one of us were to give his opinion that beef and mutton were my proper food for the royal table, I am convinced he would forbid them being served up at it for a twelvemonth. I have told you, dear sir, that I am determined (where no good is in my power) to be cautious of doing harm. I shall therefore be quiet for some time, especially as my mission here was looked upon by the *outs* as *highly important and critical*—but shall I always be a cypher? No! And now I will venture to prognosticate a little, in all the confidence of a private conversation with the Hermits.* I long to get through this subject, for, much against my will, I have said more ill of mankind in this sheet than in all my life.

"This 'man mountain' seems to have wasted his strength, by the hasty strides he made to get at the summit of power. He is dexterous at overturning, but not equally so in building. He has destroyed a host of enemies, without making a single friend. He despises his quondam helpmates, and may probably soon dismiss them. Willing to grasp all the reins, he does not consider how impossible it is for one man to do all the business. He wants tools, and will not seek them; so that the few useful regulations he has made are not

* So styled throughout Sir R. Keith's familiar letters, from the "Hermitage," the name of his father's country house.

carried properly into execution: the business accumulates in every department, and the confusion which arises from this will soon render him as obnoxious to the middling class of people as he is already to the gentlemen. The populace love the King, and are extremely averse to the delegation of his power to a man whose rise is so unbecoming. The little incendiaries of opposition (no longer restrained by the rigour of the government) print and publish the most *scandalous and infamous libels*, and by name threaten the minister. The popular clamour runs high, and the opposition of the nobles, though sluggish and timid, contributes to create a crisis of frenzy in the mob, which may (they think) be justly directed against the position of the minister. In a despotic government, the populace, when pushed beyond the limits of the law, know no bounds; I therefore sincerely hope and pray that all lawless attempts to kindle a flame among them may meet with the punishment they deserve. But if even it shall unfortunately happen, that the lower citizens shall be brought to signalise their resentment against the principal objects of it, *Brandt* and *Struensee*, you, dear sir, will not be surprised if a Danish mob should, in its vengeance, be cruel and sanguinary.

"A few hundreds of Norwegian sailors, who had some demands of pay, and were unable to feed themselves in this dear capital, went, three weeks ago, in a tumultuary, though *deliberate* manner, to demand justice at Hirschholm.* Upon the first promise of redress they returned quietly to town; but it was easy to see what might have been effected by this handful of men, if they had been led to the palace by a less pardonable impulse than that

* A country palace near Copenhagen.

of hunger. The possibility of such an application is now manifest, as well as its *impunity;* and what is very important to the fortune of Struensee, it is generally believed that his boasted intrepidity forsook him upon the late appearance of the sailors. He now becomes vulnerable from every quarter, and some who did not dare to look at him, now shake off their deep submission, together with that awe which was so necessary for the support of his unbounded authority. But the rest to-morrow. Adieu."

"*October* 20*th*, 1771.

"A succession of different articles of business has prevented my continuing my report of the state of Denmark; but as things are still nearly on the same footing, I resume my story where I left off. I am confirmed in my belief that Count Struensee was struck with a sense of his danger; and that some little time ago he would not have been averse to shelter himself from the storm, even by abandoning the summit of power. In a country of more enterprise than this, his opponents would not have let slip so favourable an opportunity; but as they have given him time, the most they have to hope for the present, is the nomination of a cabinet council of three or four persons. The sailors, who first began the riot, have been sent back by degrees to their different districts in Norway, and upon the coast; the liberty of the press is almost *entirely abolished* by a late order, and the mob is overawed by calling in a reinforcement of cavalry, which parades by squadrons, whenever any public occasion calls the people together. Notwithstanding all this, the discontent runs still very high, and perhaps before I close this letter, I may have an opportunity of mentioning to you the different schemes which are in agitation, and the share which my

attachment to her Danish Majesty (arising from my duty to the King my master) may prompt me to take in them. I do not think it the part of a foreign minister to dabble too much in ministerial intrigues, but there may be occasions where the interposition of an honest and disinterested person may keep things steady; and prevent new upstarts from adding their wild projects to those which have already reduced this kingdom to so low a pitch."

"*October 30th.*

"There is such a continual fluctuation in the politics of this Court, that I have done wisely to suspend my predictions till the moment of the vessel's departure, as I shall not then be in danger of contradicting myself, which I must have done a dozen times since the beginning of this journal, if I had trusted to the appearances of things. We are pretty *quiet* at present; the minister has suspended his projected dismissions, and the public the violence of their clamours. With respect to myself, I am neither admitted to the favour of the Court nor the intrigues of the opposition. I am in hopes that moderation and impartiality may procure me some weight, which *I shall never employ but for some essential purpose;* as *nothing but a dangerous extremity* could induce me to mix, upon this theatre, with the present actors, who neither deserve esteem from their parts or their principles. I have often thought that there was a sort of injudicious fuss made *somewhere* about my mission to this Court, which awakened the attention of different parties, and made them expect things from me which I had neither the wish nor the *orders* to undertake. The Ministers determined from the *first* to prevent my having any access to the principal persons; and as I very soon

found how little influence my opinions or good offices were likely to procure me, I was not sorry to acquiesce in an exclusion which was made general to all my colleagues.

"I am neither mortified nor fretted by this treatment: I can wait very patiently *till an opportunity shall offer to exert myself for the advantage of those very persons who now keep me at such a distance.* I pay no court to this mushroom Minister, nor do I affect to thwart him; and I am certain that I have lost nothing in his opinion, by being perhaps the man in Denmark who is least dazzled by the *éclât* of his fortune. His haughtiness to every one of the nobility, they have in a great measure deserved by their pitiful obsequiousness; but I have nothing to ask or to fear, and Count Struensee knows that my inaction is only founded upon what I think my duty. There are *some circumstances* of his situation, not as a minister, but a *man*, which I own stir up my indignation now and then; but I have an ample revenge in the anxiety, suspicions, and fears, which visibly and incessantly rack his mind. I heard within these few days that the bond of concord between him and his *Brother Count* Brandt is near its dissolution. You will judge, from my little sketch of his character, that the fall of this knight of the new order will be unlamented; and my stay in Denmark *must be very short indeed if the rest of the brotherhood do not file off in their turns before me.*

"The scenes that pass here are often ridiculous, sometimes wicked, as well as despicable; but they have at least the merit of succeeding one another in a rapid succession. I have five hundred good stories for the Hermits whenever I shall have the happiness to see them; and in the mean time, they may be assured that this Court has not the most distant resemblance to any

other under the sun. When I was upon the road to this city, I heard of the downfall of a Monsieur de W——, who had been in high favour with the Sovereign, and raised from page, to two or three handsome posts at Court. This *young* gentleman had fancied to himself that he was become a man of importance, and began to *vapour;* when Struensee at once dismissed the mighty *Maréchal de la Cour, Chambellan,* &c. &c., in a very laughable manner—by creating him very unexpectedly—*Lieutenant of Dragoons,* in a regiment in Jutland! and sending him to his garrison, with a small pension. He became probably as awkward a lieutenant, as he had been a courtier; however, his military progress is again at a stand, as he was called back to town yesterday, (to my great amusement), and will immediately resume his functions as a *wag of the Court!*

"There may be something '*rotten*' in the 'state of Denmark,' but there is nothing *rusty;* for all manner of things and persons are rubbed up alternately. *I* give my vote for Lieutenant W—— being a *Chevalier de l'Ordre* at the next promotion. But the fellow is a *fool,* and hitherto (the Royal Family excepted) that dignity has been restricted to *knaves!* But this is a venomous style, and so I'll call a new chapter."

"*November 7th.*

"'A man may smile and smile, and be a villain;
At least, I'm sure it may be so in Denmark;'

says Hamlet, and Hamlet knew his countrymen. The following example will show you, dear Sir, what right I have to join in this opinion. Soon after my arrival here, and whilst the strongest professions of attachment to England and Russia were echoing in my ears, I received a private intimation that Marshal St.

Germain * (the man most deservedly obnoxious to both crowns) was recalled to Copenhagen. My representations produced the avowal of the recall, but at the same time, the most express declaration that the Marshal was not to be employed; and that the only motive of the Sovereign's invitation was to make the Marshal spend his pension of 14,000 crowns in *philosophic retirement in Denmark!* The supposition that the ardent and haughty spirit of St. Germain could sink at once into insignificance, and he become an inactive spectator of the politics of a Court which he had formerly governed, was too gross for belief; but as I found myself unable to exclude him, my next care was to fetter these slippery politicians, by a promise in writing, (sent to the Court of Petersburg) that he was not to be replaced in any employment. This, in all probability, suspended his journey from Florence hither. Osten has promised me an explanation, but I defy the most artful gloss to varnish over the want of truth and consistency. A sad trade, indeed, is mine! for with these men must I labour to build up a lasting edifice, for which, at this moment, I know not where to look for the first stone. *Making bricks without straw is a joke to it!* I shall call in Count Panin's imperial mandates to my assistance; and if I am ordered to grapple with these gentry, I already feel (thank God) the superiority which honesty has over low cunning. I am sure if I had *carte blanche*, I could already have *dismissed half a dozen of the most worthless fellows alive.*"

There are few who can now read these manly expressions of honest British indignation without regret,

* A former minister high in office in Denmark; and to justify the sagacity respecting him of Sir R. M. Keith, an active though not ostensible agent in the revolution which followed.

that the fetters of diplomatic *etiquette* placed a bar in the way of the gallant representative of England, in his evident longings to free, by the removal of an unworthy favourite, from the toils in which she was entangled, the sister of his beloved Sovereign. Had he been able to foresee (as no one could, till the event fell like a thunderbolt on Denmark and Europe) that sacrilegious hands would be raised to involve a royal victim in the catastrophe to which he looked for her emancipation—the same prompt and chivalrous daring which bade him overstep all the limits of precedent and diplomacy, to shield from harm the already "discrowned head" of the lovely sufferer, would have made him incur any degree of personal risk or disavowal in the attempt (probably successful) to avert the meditated injury. But it was reserved for a woman, herself a Queen, to invade, at the instigation of short-sighted ambition, the sanctity hitherto surrounding the throne; and by directing popular fury against one of her own sex and rank, to teach the sanguinary lesson which revolutionary frenzy in another kingdom was not slow in carrying out. The blow might have been anticipated and the destinies of royalty reversed, if (as writes a contemporary but anonymous author) the proposal of Count Brandt, provided the King's sanction should be obtained, which would not have been difficult, to arrest the Queen Dowager and conduct her to a place of safety, had been accepted by Struensee. But his fatal security not only made him reject this questionable scheme, but left free scope to those of his enemies whose plans for his destruction were silently maturing. Various consultations were held by them relative to the measures proper to be pursued, and towards the close of the year 1771, they finally determined to proceed to action without farther delay. On the first day of

January every year it was customary at Copenhagen for the populace to assemble near the royal palace, where an ox, roasted whole, was distributed among them. As the Court and Royal Family usually assisted at this festivity, Queen Matilda had signified her intention of being present, accompanied by the King and their ordinary attendants. Such an occasion appeared too favourable to be neglected. The partisans of Juliana Maria, and Prince Frederick, having gained over a sufficient number of the soldiery, came to a resolution of breaking in among the crowd, arresting their opponents, and even of putting them to death upon the spot if any resistance were attempted.

This scheme, however, which so many circumstances appeared to facilitate, was disconcerted at the very point of execution, by an anonymous warning sent to a nobleman in the Queen's household, enjoining him to be absent, if he regarded his safety. This mysterious intimation he communicated to her Majesty, who, on pretence of indisposition, immediately announced her determination not to be present at the festivity. This resolution of course frustrated the design at the time; but the failure of the project neither inspired the persecuted party with sufficient caution against similar attempts, nor did it relax the activity of their opponents in renewing their machinations, and watching to take advantage of some more favourable crisis. Such an opportunity soon presented itself — a masked ball, which was to be given in the royal palace on the 16th January, 1772.

Of various versions of this celebrated and tragical event, all coinciding in their principal details, that of Sir Nathaniel Wraxall (ostensibly derived, immediately after the death of Carolina Matilda in Hanover, from her faithful valet de chambre, Mantel) might

on that ground alone deserve selection as the most authentic as well as graphic. But the residence of the writer at Vienna, in considerable habits of intimacy with Sir R. M. Keith, lends an additional stamp of probable accuracy, to details on which (from allusions in Sir N. W.'s letters) they had evidently conversed, and whose publicity would prevent that *most discreet of ministers* from having any *scruple* in confirming them.

"It was resolved," says Sir Nathaniel, "to seize on Queen Matilda and the principal persons attached to her at the close of the masked ball, which has been already mentioned. Count Rantzau* undertook the delicate commission of persuading the King to sign the order for the purpose, and of putting it afterwards into execution. To Koller Banner was assigned the important task of arresting Struensee; and all the inferior arrangements for ensuring success were settled with great dexterity. They were, nevertheless, on the point of being overturned at the very moment when all was ripe for action. Rantzau, upon whose courage, fidelity, and secrecy, no reliance could be placed, determined not

* Of this worthy, the British minister, not addicted to uncharitable judgments, thus wrote in a private letter, long previous to his treachery, and defection from the Struensee party:—"Count Rantzau, at this moment Lieutenant-General, Confidential Councillor, Knight of the Queen's Order, &c., would, if he had lived within reach of Justice Fielding, have furnished matter for an Old Bailey trial, any one year of the last twenty of his life. And yet this man, (who professes to despise law and morality) has been supported against the remonstrances of the Czarina, who knows that whatever power is placed in his hands, will be barefacedly sold to the French! He says he is an acquaintance of your's at Petersburgh; but this does not save him from the open and avowed contempt which I owe him. I am not without hopes of sending this honourable gentleman *once more upon his travels!*" Had this laudable wish been seconded, the Revolution of 1772 might never have taken place.

only to withdraw his assistance from the party in which he had enlisted, but to reveal the whole conspiracy to Struensee. On the afternoon of the 16th of January, only a few hours before the ball was to begin, he wrote to the minister, desiring to see him at his own apartments upon business of the utmost importance. Struensee intended to have gone thither, but being detained by a variety of affairs till it grew late, he went straight to the ball, and thereby lost the fairest opportunity of extricating himself from destruction.

"Rantzau, thus disappointed in his design of betraying his associates, was not the less resolved to renounce all further participation in their schemes. He sent a message, therefore, to the Queen Dowager, acquainting her that he should be unable to come to the palace, or to execute the part assigned him in the projected revolution, on account of a violent attack of gout, to which disease he was constitutionally subject. This message, at once embarrassing and unexpected, threw the persons to whom it was addressed into the utmost consternation. But the spirit and decision of Koller Banner soon surmounted Rantzau's pretended indisposition. Having entreated the Queen Juliana Maria not to be alarmed, and conscious of the motives from which Rantzau had acted, Koller Banner sent his own sedan-chair to the Count's house. It was accompanied by two grenadiers, with their bayonets fixed, who had positive orders to put him into the chair at all events, and to conduct him to the palace without an instant's delay. They were authorised to use force if necessary; but Rantzau, aware that resistance was vain, submitted, was carried to court, and performed the service expected of him. Koller Banner was the animating soul of the enterprise, to whose coolness, presence of mind, and intrepidity, its success must be principally attributed.

During the whole night, while at the ball, he maintained the utmost serenity of deportment, and played at the same game of cards with Monsieur Berger, whom he immediately afterwards arrested.

"The circumstances which took place in the course of the evening excited remark, and ought to have awakened suspicion. The King, Queen, and their attendants, entered the ball-room before ten o'clock; but Prince Frederick, contrary to his usual custom, and in some measure contrary to the respect due from him towards their majesties, did not arrive till more than an hour later. His countenance was flushed, and his disordered looks betrayed the agitation of his mind. As soon as he came, the Queen, advancing towards him, said, 'Vous venez d'arriver bien tard, mon frère. Qu'avez-vous?'—'C'est que j'ai eu des affaires, Madame,' replied he. 'Il me semble,' added she gaily, 'que vous auriez mieux fait de penser à vos plaisirs qu' à vos affaires, pendant une soirée de bal!'

"To this sisterly playfulness, so calculated to shake the firmness of a conspirator, the Prince made little or no reply, and the conversation ended.

"The other incident was still more calculated to have alarmed Struensee, if he had not overlooked it, or had not omitted the necessary precautions for his safety. As he was conscious of his own unpopularity, and dreaded some commotion among the people, he had surrounded the ball-room with guards, on whose fidelity he knew, or believed he could rely. But the officer who commanded them, having been gained by the opposite party, changed the soldiers. The alteration was even noticed by some of Struensee's friends; though it did not impress them with sufficient apprehension to produce any inquiry in consequence.

"Between twelve and one o'clock the King quitted

the room, and retired. The Queen, who continued there to a later hour, supped with a large party in her own box, to which Prince Frederick was not invited. After dancing the greater part of the night with Struensee, her Majesty and he withdrew nearly at the same time, about three o'clock.

"A singular fatality seems to have attended the Queen and her friends. In order to seize upon so numerous a body of men, many of whom it was unquestionable would resist, if they were not taken by surprise, and separately, it was requisite to attack them when unprepared, and alone. The Countess D'Osten had invited a select company of ladies and gentlemen, among whom were Struensee and Brandt, to drink tea in her apartments, after the conclusion of the ball. If this party had taken place, it would have frustrated the plans of the Queen Dowager and her son. They would probably have esteemed it too dangerous to attack several of the first men in Denmark, collected together in one room, who were capable of resistance, and might either have escaped, or have defended themselves successfully. In such an attempt, the Royal Palace, where the principal among them were lodged, must have been rendered a scene of blood and horror. But one of the ladies who was invited, Madame de Schimmelmann, having a violent headache, excused herself; Madame de Bulow, unwilling to go without her friend, made her excuses likewise; and the Countess D'Osten being then the only remaining female of the party, it was abandoned. Every one retired to their separate apartments, and left the chiefs of the enterprise free to commence their operations.

"The moment for action was now arrived. Rantzau, without loss of time, entering the bed-chamber of the King, awoke him, and acquainted him that there existed

a conspiracy against his person and dignity, at the head of which were his wife,* Struensee, and various of their associates. He then besought his Majesty to consult his own security by instantly signing an order for their arrest, which Rantzau tendered to him; using every argument to enforce his solicitation. But Christian, though feeble in mind, and taken by surprise, not only hesitated, but refused to affix his name to the paper. The Queen Dowager and Prince Frederick were therefore called in to his bed-side; and by means of expostulations, supported by exaggerated or false representations of the danger which he (or rather *they*) incurred from delay, they at last procured his reluctant consent. He signed the order, which was immediately carried into execution."

"An enterprize more hazardous," says the native author already quoted, (whose details, while coinciding in their main features with those of Mantel, are now given as much fuller and more graphic), "could scarcely be conceived; and nothing but the consummate prudence and address of Count Rantzau could have carried it into execution.† The Count had pledged his word to the King to hasten to his aid in an hour of peril; but the monarch's intellects were so enfeebled, and he was known to be so completely awed by the thraldom in

* "That there ever existed any political plot between Struensee and the Queen," says a modern Danish authority, "*no one* seriously thinks. But his fall was determined on, and it necessarily involved that of the Queen, the party finding it *indispensable* to remove from the country every one possessing influence."

† The anxieties experienced by the conspirators during the King's indecision, are represented as extreme. Had daylight, or even the ordinary time for the palace to become awake and astir, arrived before it was overcome, the fate designed by them for others, would have been their own! As it was, retributive justice was not altogether wanting. Within a *year*, every one engaged in the arrests, was either a disgraced fugitive, a state prisoner, or a voluntary exile from Denmark.

which he had long been kept, that it was not at all improbable he should either totally forget, or disown what he had done. In case of failure, an ignominious death awaited Rantzau; and even if successful, he was well aware that it was too probable the sovereignty would be transferred to Juliana, which he was about to *wrest* from the unsteady hand of the voluptuous Struensee. He did not risk himself by any personal communication with the troops, till the moment of action had arrived; though there is no doubt that his character for courage and generosity, the splendour of his name and influence over the soldiery, had a far greater effect in producing their adhesion, than that of his subordinates, Eichstedt and Koller Banner.

"The latter had long been a secret agent of Queen Juliana, though at the same time an assiduous and obsequious frequenter of Struensee's levees, and assistant at his ministerial dinners. He is represented as a middle-aged, saturnine person, of a cold and revengeful character; and, either from ambition or personal resentment, he eagerly embraced the office of arresting his former patron.*

"To do this it was necessary to pass through the anteroom where slept a favourite young valet of Struensee's, who, however devotedly attached to his master, was too much taken by surprise to have given him (had time permitted) sufficient warning to escape by the private staircase; though he afterwards showed great presence of mind in secreting, not only the Count's valuable watch and jewels, but some papers by which he and others might have been farther compromised. The poor lad (who, it is said, had been haunted in the earlier

* If, as a German poet, in his fine tragedy of "Struensee," has represented him, the avenger of a former object of affection seduced and abandoned by Struensee, his stern execution of the office is accounted for.

portion of the night by dreams too prophetic of some evil to his lord) was waked from perturbed slumbers by endeavours to force the lock of his door, and being commanded to open in the King's name, on pain of instant death, had no alternative but to obey.

"In an instant Colonel Koller Banner, dressed in full uniform (red turned up with black), with two inferior officers, and Captain Disentis of the Norwegian regiment, stept within; two soldiers held each a cocked pistol to his head, and another pointed a third at his breast; whilst the Colonel, bearing a wax taper in his hand, anxiously, yet softly exclaimed, 'Have you awoke the Count?' 'I have not,' replied the trembling page. 'Remember,' replied the Colonel, 'you are a state prisoner, and your life pays the forfeit if you have told a falsehood.' The Colonel then tried the door of Struensee's room, and finding it fast, compelled the reluctant valet to surrender the master key, and the door was opened as softly as possible.*

"Colonel Banner was the first who entered, followed by the three inferior officers, each with a drawn sword in his right, and a wax light in his left hand. The Count slept so soundly, that he did not awake with all

* This sudden transition from a palace to a dungeon, if it can scarcely be heightened, may perhaps be brought more home to the imagination by the description of the luxurious apartment so shortly to be exchanged for a gloomy vault, and the pallet of the meanest malefactor. "Count Struensee's apartment," (says the Danish MS., so often quoted) "was furnished in a style of royal magnificence; the mirrors were large and of the purest glass; the most common utensils, of silver, or silver gilt. Count Struensee's bed-room was hung with rich figured damask, the furniture of his bed and of the windows was purple velvet, richly trimmed with deep gold fringe; the canopy was shaped in the form of a royal crown. Struensee was particularly nice in his person and dress, and used the most costly perfumes profusely. His valet slept in an ante-room through which lay the way to the Count's bed-chamber; the valet's bed furniture was magnificent, being sky-blue silk trimmed with silver lace and fringe; it was concealed by a superb screen.

this noise or blaze of tapers. He lay with his head on his arm, the book with which he had read himself to sleep, lay on the floor. After a moment's pause, during which Koller Banner stood gazing sternly on the unconscious culprit, he approached, and, touching Struensee on the shoulder, awoke him to all the horrors of sudden and sure perdition.

"His consternation may be much easier conceived than described. Suddenly he rose half up, and wild with terror, cried—'What is all this? In God's name, what is all this about?' Colonel Banner, in a loud and stern voice, answered—'You are the King's prisoner! behold the royal warrant for your arrest. You must dress yourself without delay and come with me.' 'You will allow me to find clothes to dress with,' said Struensee; and Banner permitted the valet to go to his master's wardrobe, whence he hastily snatched a light-blue morning frock, which had been made in London, of Manchester velvet, and a waistcoat of the same;* but such was his confusion that he could not find any small-clothes, and the Count was forced to put on the pair of a *gay colour* which had formed part of his masquerade dress. It was an excessively cold morning, and the Count was permitted to wrap himself in his fur cloak, which having been procured, he was hurried by Banner and the others to the guard-room. The shivering valet, while permitted, at his master's request, to dress himself, contrived to take up the Count's gold English repeater, his ring and brooch, both of diamonds of great value, and a purse lying near the bed, containing about eighty ducats, all of which he trusted he had secured for his master's benefit. In a few moments he was called below; there he saw the

* It was in these clothes that the unfortunate Count afterwards appeared (probably from necessity) at his execution.

guard-room blazing with tapers, and the two state prisoners, who were kept separate. Struensee, accompanied by officers with drawn swords and loaded pistols, was put into the first of two coaches which stood at the door, and conveyed to the citadel. Here the prisoners were at first confined in a room belonging to the officers, two of whom, relieved every two hours, were constantly inside, and two sentinels outside the door. During their progress to the citadel, Struensee is said to have testified the deepest despondency, while his more energetic comrade Count Brandt, whose ineffectual resistance at the time of his arrest, and dauntless conduct on the scaffold, attested his nobler origin, as well as courageous temper, displayed the intrepidity which never forsook him.*

"On arriving at the citadel, and when Count Struensee was delivered as a state criminal to the commandant, the former said in a mournful voice, 'I suppose this visit is totally unexpected by you.' 'Not at all,' replied the uncourteous commandant. 'I have been, for a long time past, constantly expecting your excellency.' During the first day of his confinement, Struensee seemed stupified; he did not eat, he drank only a little wine and water; he wept, but not excessively, till he saw his valet enter, whose captivity called a flood of tears to the relief of his master's bosom. The Count, to whom no one was permitted to speak, was so overcome by the honest grief depicted in the face of the young man, that he took him by the hand, kissed his

* Count Ernest Brandt was descended from a noble though not titled family. In person he was moderately tall, lightly made, a fine military figure, but considerably marked by the small pox. His eyes, hair, and complexion, were dark, his disposition gay and lively in the extreme; he dressed with great elegance, and was the idol of the ladies of Queen Matilda's giddy court.

cheek, and said, 'Poor fellow! I intended to have provided for thee; I delayed it too long, not wishing to lose thy services, and now thou art the companion of my prison! Canst thou forgive me for this?' The young man, affected to a degree of intense sympathy, sobbing and crying like a child, threw himself at his master's feet, and embracing his knees, said, 'Oh God! oh God! if I had not opened the door, my beloved master might have escaped!'*

"The officers who were present, could hardly refrain from shedding tears. Availing himself of their not understanding German, the valet told the Count, while resting his head on his knees, that he had secured his gold repeater, diamond pin, and brooch, and also his purse, which he slipped into his hand. He also contrived to communicate the appalling tidings of the arrest of the Queen, and her removal to Cronenburg, and of the incarceration of the Count's brother, and other adherents, and the popular tumults which had ensued; which, though not wholly unexpected, deepened Struensee's already overwhelming apprehensions. His characteristic generosity in wishing to provide (from the purse he had secreted) for his servant's possible necessities, led to a search, on the entrance of the coarse unfeeling commandant, whereby the latter became possessed of the magnificent spoil: not only of the money contained in the purse, but of the valuable gold watch purchased by the Count in England (with all its appendages) for three hundred pounds; a ring valued at a thousand, and a brooch at five hundred, both presents in former

* There seems some uncertainty in this. If the secret staircase led, as has been alleged, to the Queen's apartments, he would have been infallibly seized there; if it merely led to a gallery communicating with the rest of the palace, he might have escaped from thence, but not from the city.

times of splendour and prosperity from the Queen.* The sole relics of past state and grandeur, (left, as if in humiliating contrast with the horrors of the dungeon they so strangely adorned), were parts of the silver-gilt dressing plate, whose daily use must have reminded the chained criminal of advantages recklessly abused, and madly forfeited.

"The commandant, addressing the Count, told him that orders were given to allow him four shillings sterling per diem,† and two for his attendant; and then turning to the valet, he said, 'You have told the Count of the riots and other occurrences, as well as handed him a purse of ducats. Now mark what I say. If during your confinement and attendance you tell the Count anything whatever, *even if it rains*, you shall be sent to Gluckstadt, condemned to perpetual slavery and chains. As the Count is ignorant of our mother tongue, and you can speak German, you are to use that language, and to speak loud enough to be heard by the sentinels outside; and care will be taken that the officers on guard shall also know German.'"

It is said, on the same authority, that it was by the influence of Count Rantzau, that the valets of the two Counts were confined in the same prisons with their masters, and allowed to attend them. He was afraid they would otherwise be condemned to perpetual indignities, if not to private torture; but as the privilege was withdrawn, after the judicial investigations began, it has been hinted that threats at least of the latter severities were employed to extort confessions from Struensee. But we must not allow these interesting

* It will be recollected that she had made a present of equal value to Count Rantzau.

† A sum fully equal to the decent supply of his wants; and said to be equal in Copenhagen, in 1772, to twenty shillings in London.

details respecting less illustrious victims of the conspiracy (Brandt having, as before mentioned, been meantime arrested, after an obstinate resistance, by Colonel Beringshiold, and General Gähler and his lady, who had that evening formed the King's card party, been placed in arrest) to detain us longer from its most daring and unprecedented feature.

"The most dangerous and important act of the enterprise still remained to be performed—that of arresting Queen Carolina Matilda. After retiring from the ball, she continued for some time in her own room, before she went to bed, occupied in nursing her little daughter, who was still at the breast. Struensee's chamber being situated under the Queen's, the noise made in seizing his person was indistinctly heard by her Majesty. She by no means, however, attributed it to the real cause. On the contrary, imagining that the disturbance was occasioned by the company which, as she knew, was to meet in the apartment of Madame D'Osten, and which party she concluded had been transferred to Struensee's, she ordered one of her women to go down and request them to be less intemperate in their mirth, as they would otherwise prevent her from taking any repose. The woman did not return, the noise ceased, and the Queen having soon retired to rest, fell into a profound sleep.

"It was about five o'clock in the morning when she was awakened by a Danish female attendant, who always lay in the adjoining room. Holding a candle in one hand, she held out a paper to the Queen in the other, which, with marks of agitation, she requested of her Majesty to peruse. It contained a request, rather than an order, couched in very concise but respectful terms, stating that the 'King of Denmark, for reasons of a private nature, wished her to remove to one of the

royal palaces in the country for a few days.' The Queen, in her first surprise, had imagined that the note which she saw in the woman's hand, came from the Baron de Bulow, her Master of the Horse, and that its purport was to inquire whether it was her pleasure to hunt on that day. But no sooner had she cast her eye over the paper and read its contents, with the royal signature annexed, than she instantly comprehended the nature and extent of her misfortune. Conscious that if she could only gain access to the King, she could in a moment overturn the plans of her enemies, she sprung out of bed, and without waiting to put on anything except a petticoat and shoes, she rushed into the antechamber. There the first object which she met was Count Rantzau, seated quietly in a chair. Recollecting then her dishevelled state, she cried out,* 'Eloignez-vous, Monsieur le Comte, pour l'amour de Dieu, car je ne suis pas présentable!' She immediately ran back into her chamber, and hastily threw on some clothes, assisted by her women. On attempting a second time to leave her room, she found that Rantzau had withdrawn himself, but had stationed an officer in the doorway, who opposed her further passage. Rendered almost frantic by this insult, added to her distress, she seized him by the hair, demanding to see Count Struensee or the King. 'Madam,' said he, 'I only do my duty and obey my orders. There is no Count Struensee

* At this period, 1772, Count Rantzau was about sixty years of age; his features were good, his complexion florid, and when young he must have been very handsome, though he had a slight cast in his eye. He was near six feet high; his hair had turned grey through age, but to hide that unyouthful mark, the old beau used pomatum thickened with hair powder burnt black. His manners were highly polished; when he arrested the young Queen, he had on a scarlet surtout lined and trimmed with fur; a commander-in-chief's regimental coat beneath, red, turned up with buff; and under dress of silk.

now, nor can your Majesty see the King.' Having pushed him aside, she advanced to the door of the antechamber, where two soldiers had crossed their firelocks in order to stop her progress. The Queen commanded them to let her pass, and added promises of reward if they obeyed. Both the soldiers fell on their knees, and one of them said in Danish, 'It is a sad duty, but we must perform it. Our heads are answerable if we allow your Majesty to pass.' As no man, however, dared to lay hands upon the Queen, she stepped over the muskets, which were crossed, and ran, half wild, along the corridor to the King's apartment. She even forced her way into it by violence; but her enemies, aware that she might try to gain admittance, and justly apprehensive of her influence over him, had taken the precaution of removing him, betimes, to another part of the palace.

"Exhausted by the agitation of her mind, and by such exertions of body, the Queen attempted no further resistance. She returned to her own chamber, where she was aided to dress herself,* and informed that she must instantly quit Copenhagen. Rantzau had the insolence to say to her, alluding to his gouty feet, 'Vous voyez, Madame, que mes pieds me manquent; mais mes bras sont libres, et j' en offrirai un à votre Majesté, pour l'aider à monter en voiture.'† She was then put into a coach, which waited for her at the door

* It was at this moment that the valet of Struensee is said to have been escorted *at his own request* to her apartment to recover his master's fur pelisse, which had been wrapped round her on leaving the ball-room; and it forms not the least strange episode of an unparalleled transaction, that the toilet of a Queen should have been actually proceeding in the apparently unheeded presence of not only this page, but of a room full of soldiers.

† Without exactly crediting the anecdote which ascribes to the irritated feelings of the Queen and the woman, the deserved reply to this

near the chapel of the palace. Two ladies, a maid servant, the little princess her daughter, and a major in the Danish service, got into the carriage with her. They took the road to Cronenburg, a distance of about twenty-four miles, which, as they drove at a great rate, they soon reached, and in which fortress the Queen was confined."

"There was immured," writes a contemporary author, "in the gloomy mansions of guilt and horror, a Queen, whose personal charms and mental accomplishments would have melted into compassion the heart of a ruffian. In this inhospitable fortress she had not even been permitted to have the necessary clothes to prepare herself against the severity of the weather in this frozen region; nor was she indulged with more conveniences in her apartments than those granted to criminals of the lowest station, but treated with the greatest indignity by her unfeeling keepers and an insolent soldiery."

Nor did the wrongs of this unhappy Princess, or the injuries inflicted on her reputation and threatened against her life, end here. "In order to excite the populace against this illustrious and ill-fated victim, wretches had been hired to cry out 'Justice against Matilda!'—'*Vivat Regina Juliana!*' and in the emotions thus excited, the blind multitude went to the greatest excesses, pillaging and destroying above sixty houses, and breaking out into invectives against the unfortunate Queen, whom they had been taught to accuse of adultery and enormous crimes against the State and the King. To lend colour to the latter insinuations, and by way of appeasing the popular anxiety thus conjured up respecting the imbecile monarch's life, he

insolence, of a "*soufflet bien appliqué*," it is certain they found more dignified vent in well-founded reproaches, and predictions of a retributive fate which ere long overtook their object.

was paraded, at noon of the day on which the arrests were made, in a coach drawn by eight milk-white horses, attended by Prince Frederick, (*significantly* styled in the account the *hereditary* Prince,) through the streets of the capital; which, in the evening, were brilliantly illuminated, as if in honour of some glorious victory over a foreign enemy, which had saved the country from ruin, amid the acclamations of the multitude. And lest the rage thus fomented should have given place (as it ere long did) to pity for the young victim of premeditated malice and treachery, whose fortitude under this terrible disaster was truly admirable, an order was issued in the name of the King for a public thanksgiving in all the churches of the capital, for the protection granted by the Almighty by watching over the safety of the King, the royal family, and the whole kingdom. The Senate, (or, rather, Council), composed, be it remembered, almost exclusively of the party who had conspired against the Queen, and to whom her return to power, or even vindication from criminal charges would have been instantly fatal, declared her, without any form of trial, guilty of adultery, and of being privy to the poison administered to her husband; and would probably have passed upon her Majesty a most iniquitous sentence, if Mr. Keith, the English minister, had not solemnly protested against all acts of violence with which the person of the Queen seemed to be threatened. He bravely vindicated oppressed innocence in a manner worthy of his character; refuted with much energy her accusers, and concluded with denouncing the vengeance of his nation, and the bombardment of Copenhagen, if justice were not done to the sister of his sovereign.* These menaces

* A significant, though less important consequence of them, may be traced in the permission for such ladies of the Queen's household as had not been dismissed, to rejoin her.

suspended the immediate effect of a most precipitate and unparalleled judgment."

Such is the narration as extracted from an author, anonymous certainly, but on that account the more disinterested (his very name and publication being matter of curiosity and speculation to the Queen's *most devoted adherents*), of that unhappy Princess's critical situation, and the interposition in her behalf of the British minister. That it was not only warranted by the circumstances, but laudable and necessary, the prompt and flattering approbation of his Sovereign sufficiently testified; and though modern Denmark, happily exempted during the long peaceful reign of the son of Carolina Matilda, and by the now auspicious union of two once hostile branches of its Royal Family, from the tumults of faction, indignantly repels the idea of her life having been ever actually in danger, certain it is, that at the time a very different opinion prevailed. And when it is considered that the repeal of the act rendering adultery punishable with death, formed, with the mass of the people, the "head and front" of Struensee's offences,—and that to this crime was added the grave imputation of poisoning her husband (brought forward, though, without so much as the shadow of proof on her public trial)—from popular fury at least and the violence of faction, if not from the strict course of justice, Colonel Keith was warranted in apprehending the worst; and in stepping forward in the bold and novel manner (narrated from his own "Table-Talk" by a noble lady, one of his few remaining and highly gifted contemporaries), to the rescue of the sister of his sovereign.*

* We have the authority of the accurate Archdeacon Coxe, and that after two separate visits to the court of Denmark had given opportunity for the correction of erroneous first impressions, that the Queen, during her long imprisonment, was not only "uncertain of the fate that awaited

"On hearing," writes this living chronicle of a long told tale, whose personal interest in its hero stamped the circumstances, as related by himself, indelibly on her vigorous memory, "that the Queen was seized, and a Council met to deliberate on her fate, and that *her life was considered in danger*,—Colonel Keith forced his way into the Council, and denounced war against Denmark, if a hair of her head were touched. This done, he despatched a messenger forthwith to England, and immediately locked himself and his household up till the answer should arrive. The answer *did* arrive" (from the state of the weather and roads, not for nearly four long weeks of harassing, but, as the following correspondence shows, of self-sustained and firmly encountered suspense) "in the shape of a huge square packet. It was placed in Colonel Keith's hands, and they trembled, and he shook all over as he cut the strings. The parcel flew open, and the order of the Bath fell at his feet! The insignia had been inclosed by the King's own hands, with a despatch commanding him to invest himself forthwith, and appear at the Danish Court."

The duplicate of this gracious despatch, addressed by the foreign secretary to a father, whose heart, no doubt, then swelled high (as even now, at the distance of seventy long years, does that of the writer of these pages) on its perusal, is happily extant, and bearing, as it does, a fresh testimony to the brotherly kindness, generosity, and delicacy of feeling of George III., as well as affording a most favourable specimen of the official correspondence of a by-gone period, it is with peculiar satisfaction subjoined.

her, but had reason to apprehend that the party who arrested her, meditated *still more violent measures*."

LORD SUFFOLK, SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS, TO R. KEITH, ESQ., HERMITAGE.

St. James's, February 28th, 1772.

SIR,

I cannot deny myself the satisfaction of acquainting you with the eminent merit of your son, his Majesty's minister at Copenhagen, and the honourable testimony his Majesty has been pleased to give of his approbation, by conferring on him the order of the Bath.

The ability, spirit, and dignity with which Sir Robert Keith has conducted himself in a very delicate and difficult position, has induced his Majesty to accompany the honour he bestows with very particular marks of distinction. He has made the nomination at a time when there was *no stall vacant.* The instrument expressly recites eminent services to have been the inducement. The dispensation with ceremonies is carried farther than usual. His Majesty has directed me to inform Sir R. Keith, that he chose the time *previous to the issue of his negotiation,* on purpose to distinguish his *merit, independent of his success;* and he has been pleased to signify that the whole is to be considered as his act, and that Sir R. Keith is not to inquire into the expenses of the present his Majesty has made.

The messenger who sets off for Copenhagen to-night, carries the insignia of the order to him, and his appearance with them at the Court where he resides, will be the first notice they will have of this signal grace from his sovereign.*

* Walpole (in one particular erroneously it will be seen) writes at the time :—" Mr. Keith's spirit in behalf of the Queen has been rewarded. The red ribbon has been sent him, though there was *no vacancy,* with

You will allow me to offer my congratulations to you on this occasion, and to express the share I take in the pleasure this event will give to a gentleman, for whose public character I have always entertained the highest respect, though I have not the honour of being personally known to you.

I am, Sir,

Your most obedient and most humble servant,

SUFFOLK.

The extension since given to an order, at that time limited to five-and-twenty knights, and confined to the highest grade of diplomatic or other special services, renders us very inadequate judges of the value of the boon thus announced, or of its effect on the mind and feelings of the negotiator, after the anxious suspense which it arrived so opportunely to relieve. But with this happy termination in view, it will be pleasing, as well as profitable, to accompany the yet unconscious object of royal favour through the long weeks of conscientious self-scrutiny which, while it would, under any conceivable result, have supported him, must yet have heavily taxed the moral courage of the lonely diplomatist, placed, as he truly says, in a situation of unparalleled and singular responsibility.

SIR R. M. KEITH TO MR. KEITH.

[*Strictly confidential.*]

Copenhagen, Feb. 9th, 1772.

DEAR FATHER,

I need not tell you in what anxiety and distress I have passed these last three weeks, nor with what impatience I wait for letters from England. The roads

orders to put it on directly himself, *as there is no sovereign in Denmark to invest him with it*." This last reason, though almost implied by the novel mode adopted, is certainly not expressed.

and weather are so bad, that I may still be a week before I receive answers to my first letters. In a most difficult situation I have endeavoured to act with moderation as well as firmness. My position is singular, perhaps unprecedented. I am satisfied in my conscience that I have neglected nothing my reach of judgment could suggest to me, and with that comfortable reflection on my side, I await the decision of my superiors, with the hope of their approbation. An abler man might have done better service; but my superiors will judge candidly, and he who has done his best and despises Fortune, may sleep in quiet.

You may be curious to know something of the fate of those men who brought on the late unhappy convulsion. Count Struensee is loaded with irons and (which is worse) with guilt, in a common prison in the citadel. Without knowing either the particulars of the accusations against him or the proofs, I believe I may venture to say that he will soon finish his wild career by the hands of the executioner. The treatment of Count Brandt in the prison, and the race he has run, bear so near an affinity to those of Struensee, that it may be presumed his doom will be similar. Never, never was blind ambition and presumptuous infatuation carried further than by these men, and their fate, though shocking, is by no means surprising. Good night to the Hermits. I am quite jaded with writing, having done nothing else from morning till night for above three long weeks, and alone too!

February 12th.

I am now in hourly expectation of a messenger, and I have cast about in my mind all the different sorts of orders * he may bring me. Allow me, dear Sir, to say

* Excepting probably the "Order" so gratifyingly conferred.

to you (and before the decision of my superiors arrives), that having in the six-and-twenty days of my present confinement, recapitulated every incident of these eight months past, I would not, if it were in my power, *recall one step* I have taken, or *one word* I have either spoken or written. This is bold, but I declare it in the sincerity of my heart, and I am sure that you and the Hermits will believe me.

The order of chivalry* I mentioned in my former letters has been *abolished*, and three of the original knights are in the citadel, two of them chained to the floor. Struensee, I hear, is sullen and silent. Brandt, on the contrary, sings from morning to night, and talks perpetually of the players over whom he had the direction. All this gaiety, real or affected, procures him no pity, nor alters the opinion of the public, who look upon him as one of the most mischievous and cruel fellows that ever existed. Struensee must reflect with horror upon his abuse of unlimited power, and still more upon the irreparable injury he has done to all his benefactors. I could cry like a child when I reflect upon that part of the story!

Struensee's brother was formerly a professor of mathematics, settled at Lignitz in Silesia. I am informed that he resisted for near two years, the tempting offers made to him by his brother. At last, however, he joined him here in May last, leaving a wife and three children at Lignitz. He is a man of knowledge in every branch of mathematics, and from what I have seen of him, he is little made for the mad pursuits of ambition. He was a deputy in the Chamber of Finances, and in a few days after the date of the late Revolution was to have been raised to the post of *Ministre des Finances*. I do not know how, for his

* That of Matilda.

heart has been proof against the solicitations and example of his worthless brother; but his accepting much larger sums of money than his services could have merited, makes me suppose that *his philosophy had given way*. Yet there is a sort of tenderness in everybody not to devote this man to absolute destruction and infamy, till the proof of his guilt is brought out. He teaches the officers geometry and fortification, as I am told, in prison; which shows at least that he enjoys some *sang-froid*. His wife never was at Copenhagen, and her lot at any rate is a hard one. Madame de —— and her husband are sent off without any settlement, but with express orders not to return. These husbands and wives who had little or no connexion together in days of prosperity must be very agreeable company to one another, in the shipwreck of their reputation and fortunes. Such a set of people have indeed put my *love of humanity* to a severe trial!

February 13th.

My secretary arrived yesterday, and (thank God!) the approbation of the first steps of my conduct *is as full as my heart could wish*. If there are truth and consistency in Denmark, I make no doubt of answering the expectations of my superiors, in bringing this affair to a tolerable issue. But I cannot be too much on my guard, for, indeed, my notions of right and wrong are widely different from those in this country. Heaven grant me success in my delicate negotiation, and then a clear riddance of such a mission! I wear my very soul to shreds by fretting at the disorder and mischief I see around me. The convulsions in this kingdom are endless, and the moments of interval without pleasure. You know M— Hall, that nasty, boggy, bare, and foggy, corner of the world. If I would exchange

it against some kingdoms I have seen, with the obligation of governing them, may I be hanged and dissected! I have seen more mirth at a Scottish * Dredgy, than ever brightened the features of the best sort of people I have seen here. There may, and *must* be many good and valuable people in these dominions (their want of passions and temptations convinces me of it) but the cheerful, the affectionate, the independent, and sociable, come not within my ken. Basta, basta, God bless them I say, and sincerely too!

My secretary had instructions when in London to see my brother, Mr. Conway, the Drummonds, &c., *but he was despatched back to me the same day*, and saw nobody. I was sorry for this, for I long to know something of public and private occurrences at home. A man in Denmark is truly on a par with the *departed.*

February 14*th.*

I shall dispatch a messenger to England to-morrow, by whom this letter goes. I am happy to repeat to you that the goodness and condescension of my Sovereign towards me, amply repays all my trouble and anxiety. God grant that every thing may answer the wishes of so humane and worthy a prince! I have every reason to believe that the return of this messenger will remove in part the inquietude of my superiors, and justify my reliance upon my endeavours. My zeal is mixed with affectionate gratitude, and attachment, and such a sentiment is sure to be active, and ought to be useful. But I must not be too sanguine. My countryman † loves crooked and narrow paths: but I seize fast hold of him, and keep him in the

* Dinner after a funeral.

† The title in the cypher for Count Osten, the Foreign Minister of Denmark.

King's highway. The Queen of Denmark enjoys perfect health in Hamlet's castle. I wish the punishment of her cruellest *enemies*, the late minister, and his associates, were over, that the heat of party might subside, and her Majesty's situation be altered for the better.

February 15th.

My perplexities increase by subterfuges and evasions, to which there is no end in this country. The result of this troublesome and afflicting business is not within my computation with such men as I have to deal with. My part shall be fair, firm, honest, and assiduous. Heaven grant that in a post or two I may be able to give a more pleasing account of my prospects.

Adieu, dear father, most affectionately.

R. M. K.

The extracts already given, studiously and conscientiously silent as they are, even to the most confidential of domestic circles, on the details of events too sacred then, and still, for official publicity, will suffice to show that the office of endeavouring to shield from the malice of faction the head of its destined victim, was at least no sinecure, and one that called as largely on the patience and temper as the firmness and dignity of the negociator. That its difficulties did not decrease, will be seen by the following correspondence.

SIR R. M. KEITH TO HIS SISTER.

(*Confidential to the Hermits only.*)

Copenhagen, February 26th, 1772.

Dear Anne,

I never worked at the mines in Mexico; but I question if it is either a harder or a more comfortless life than that I have had for these six weeks. What precious metals I have dug out of my mine I shall be

better able to tell you at the end of this letter; which, like all my last, is written by fits and starts, and may not be finished these ten days. I thank my father and you for your joint packet of 28th January, which has been a great comfort to me in the dearth of letters from England. At this critical time, the abominable Danish climate has choked up the roads and rivers with mountains of snow, so that the Lord knows when the posts may penetrate. I am uneasy for the impatient feelings of those in London, and I leave you to guess at my own anxiety. But I must try to lay aside my dismal tale, for thinking about it has worn me down, *mind and body*.

Feb. 28th.

Just as I was; no letters! but snow over the whole face of nature! Well! my purgatory has been in Denmark, and praise Heaven! it cannot last much longer!

March 1st.

Yesterday's post brought me my father's short note of February 7th. The news of the death of the Princess of Wales* affected me sincerely. You all know how much I thought myself honoured by the good opinion of that Princess, who, I am firmly persuaded, possessed as many intrinsic good qualities, and as much affability of temper as any lady in Europe. The distresses of our worthy Sovereign are indeed manifold; and if ever King deserved the tender affections of his subjects, as well as their obedience, we may say without flattery, that he is that King! For my own part, I shall think my life well spent, if all my efforts can (as I hope they will) alleviate the weight of *one* of his Majesty's late afflictions. But more of that hereafter.

* Widow of Frederick Prince of Wales, Father of George III.

There are two remarks irresistibly suggesting themselves on this portion of Sir R. M. Keith's confidential correspondence, which, at the risk of somewhat interrupting its interest, it is impossible to suppress. First, that the panegyric of this honest and upright minister upon the Monarch whom in those essential qualities of character he resembled, was purely disinterested, and not influenced (as it might have been at a later period) by personal gratification, and the sense of distinguished benefits. No! while the master, as we have seen, acknowledged merit, independently of success, the servant eulogised his Sovereign, not as a benefactor but as a man; and had discernment to view the then little appreciated George III., as impartial posterity has since learned to regard him.

The other, and less pleasing subject of remark, is the impossibility of not connecting in some degree with the catastrophe of the 15th January, and the arrest of her daughter, (tidings of which reached London, "just as the levee was going to begin," on the 29th,) the death, on the 8th of February following, of her amiable and affectionate mother, the Princess, whose demise one who knew her well so feelingly deplored. Could the knell of a widowed parent, already in declining health, be more fatally or cruelly rung, than by seeing hurled from the summit of power, traduced in reputation, and menaced in life, the posthumous child whose smiles had consoled her under her early bereavement, and whose bridal wreath she had watered with prophetic tears? What mother does not feel as if she too must have died *heart-broken* under the blow? The particulars of the event are thus affectingly given in the chronicles of the day.

"The night before her Highness's departure, the King observed nothing particular in her, except that she

embraced him with *greater warmth and affection* than usual. He afterwards retired with the physician, who told him her Highness would not outlive the morning, which determined his Majesty to stay there all night. He did not see his royal mother again, for she remained very quiet all the night, and gave no tokens of death till a few minutes before she expired, when she *laid her hand upon her heart*, and went off without a groan. His Majesty was then informed, and he came and took her by the hand and kissed it, and *burst into tears*." Speaking of this sad event, Walpole says: "The Princess Dowager died on Saturday morning. She could not be unapprised of her approaching fate, for she had existed upon *cordials alone* for ten days—from the time she had received the fatal news from Denmark; and died before she could hear again of her daughter."

While the feelings of her affectionate relatives in England were thus fatally tried, those of the royal captive, during two months of rigorous confinement in the solitude of the fortress, for which she had so suddenly exchanged the splendours of a Court, must have been cruelly put to the proof, and are said to have come nobly forth from the ordeal. In addition to the traits of benevolence and forgetfulness of self, before mentioned, of her sharing an already limited allowance of food and money with her fellow-sufferers, the following touching anecdote has been preserved. The governor, having requested her Majesty to withdraw her bounty from an officer who had been closely confined for some years in a remote turret, debarred from all human intercourse, on suspicion merely of having been accessory to the enlistment of Danish subjects in the service of a foreign power, the Queen made no other answer than the following line from Voltaire:—

"Il suffit qu'il soit homme, et qu'il soit malheureux."

If such were her feelings of compassion and sympathy towards an unknown outcast, how cruelly must they have been lacerated on hearing, no doubt with all possible aggravations, the tidings of the rigorous treatment experienced in prison, and still more the barbarous sentence passed, and shortly afterwards executed on her late ministers Brandt and Struensee; men who, without ascribing to them the undue favour assumed by their joint enemies, had so lately been her associates, not only in political power, but privileged intimacy. "When," says her biographer, "her Majesty was informed of the tragical circumstances relating to the two noble criminals, she said to Miss Mostyn, her attendant maid of honour, 'Unhappy men! they have paid dearly for their attachment to their King, and zeal for my service!'"

A more selfish and less generous mind might have reversed the exclamation, on reflecting that the forfeiture of a crown had been her penalty for participation in their measures!

To these measures, and their consequence to their unhappy originators, we must now revert. "The Struensees and Count Brandt," says a contemporary, "exposed to the derision and outrages of the vilest of mobs, were conducted in unmanly triumph to the tribunal of their merciless judges. Worn out with fruitless interrogations, they were threatened with the terrors of the torture, under which confessions of crimes never committed, might possibly have been elicited."

Be that as it may, there were humiliating circumstances enough in Count Struensee's situation (enhanced as they must at every moment have been by contrast with his previous unexampled career of luxury and self-gratification) to prostrate a spirit more unyielding and

resolute than that of this spoiled child of fortune. The second night of his incarceration, the valet, who was lodged in a room below his master, heard about midnight, heavy steps ascending the stairs, and a clank, as if of a heap of chains or fetters, thrown on the floor above his head. This disturbance filled him with terror, for his fears foreboded that these irons were for the Count, and he expected, in fear and trembling, the same treatment. Presently he heard the sound of hammers, as if rivetting on the fetters! In about half an hour the persons descended, and passed his door, which was some relief; but concern for his master, and perturbed dreams of his being beheaded and quartered, kept him in tears and agitation till the morning.

On proceeding with a heavy heart to the Count's apartment, the looks of the sentinels, who sorrowfully shook their heads, confirmed his apprehensions. Struensee strove to conceal his disgrace, covering his face with the bedclothes, but when the eyes of the master and man (both sunken with weeping) met, disguise was needless; and the valet saw with horror and dismay, that his master was chained to a massive iron staple driven into the wall, which passed through a swivel fixed to a thick ring that encircled his right ancle and left wrist, and so short as barely to allow him to sit on the front of the bed, the staple being fixed in the centre of the bedstead. The valet, from excess of grief, could scarcely speak—seizing Struensee's hand, he kissed it with respectful affection, and bathed with his tears the iron ring that encircled his master's wrist.

Horror-struck as was the unhappy minion of luxury when he first became a chained captive—summoning to his aid the philosophy of which, as natural to his temperament, he was wont to make a boast, ere Christian resignation slowly superseded her inefficient

substitute, he gradually strove to adapt not only his bodily position to the length of his chain, but his mind to the dreadful circumstances of his situation. He began to take his meals with somewhat of an appetite; breakfasted at about nine on coffee and biscuits, at one he dined, took a glass of light wine and a cup of coffee, drank tea* about five or six, took no supper, but drank a glass of port and water. He was always very abstemious as to wines and spirits; at least after he was placed about the King. Everything furnished by the *restaurateur* for his use was carefully examined; even the bread was cut open, and the napkins shaken and held up to the light; and his meat was cut by his valet, not being permitted to use a knife, lest he should commit suicide.

So far, his fetters excepted, no unmanly endeavours seem to have been used by his enemies to deny him a measure of the comforts and decencies by which he had been so profusely surrounded; but after a time, for his more secure confinement, or (more correctly to define its object), for his greater punishment, he was removed from the officers' barracks to a room in the vallum (or ditch) behind the church; a small, low square apartment, with one small window in the corner, and scarcely fourteen feet square. The walls were bare; a pallet bedstead, and bed of the meanest kind, a table, a stove, and two chairs for the officers, formed the miserable furniture of this gloomy abode; but even here, as if to tantalize memory, the silver appendages beforementioned were suffered to "flout the dungeon's misery." He was now chained more closely than before, so much so, that it was with difficulty he could sit upright on the side of his bed; his faithful valet

* The reader must have been struck by the frequent mention (derived no doubt from England) of a refreshment then little known in Europe.

suddenly dismissed, without even the melancholy satisfaction of any leave-taking; and the Count so inconsolably affected by his loss, as, (it is said,) to have attempted suicide, by forcing his silver fork down his throat. Yet here it was, in this abject, hopeless, and forlorn condition, that Religion first came to shed her mild light athwart his prison's gloom, and the still deeper darkness of his benighted mind; and from hence did the man who had entered a sensualist, a libertine, and a sceptic, emerge, under her salutary teaching, a convert, a penitent, and a Christian!

We have already alluded to the thorough relinquishment of his rooted scepticism, and gradual, but firm adoption of the great truths of Christianity, under the judicious guidance of Dr. Münter, the clergyman appointed by the Court to see and converse with him; and whose success derives additional weight from the determined reluctance (probably on that account) of his future convert, to lend other than a constrained attention to his supposed equally formal ministrations. Few interviews, indeed, had however taken place, ere the earnest solicitudes of the able pastor found their reward in the softened feelings and candid admissions of his judiciously-treated penitent, during a series of nearly thirty conferences, the detailed record of which, as happily preserved by the eminent divine* with whom

* As much of the authenticity and consequent usefulness of similar records depends on the character and qualifications of their narrator, the following tribute to Dr. Münter, by a most competent authority, is subjoined :—

"That he was a distinguished divine, an accomplished classical scholar, and popular author, as well as one of the most acceptable preachers of his day, is matter of history. But his fame as a writer and a theologian chiefly rests on his well-known publication containing an account of his interviews with the celebrated Count Struensee. I believe there is not a language in Europe into which that striking and instructive narrative

they were held, is well worthy of perusal. A few of their most striking particulars can alone be given here. The spirit in which they found their object may be best and most shortly described in his own words, ushering in the celebrated confession* of faith, in which Struensee himself embodied the substance of their conversations:—

"You desire, my dear friend, that I should leave behind me my thoughts how I was induced to alter my sentiments in regard to religion. You have been a witness of it. You have been my guide, and therefore I am infinitely obliged to you. I satisfy your desire with so much the greater pleasure, as it will afford me an opportunity of recollecting the train of ideas, and impressions of mind, which have produced my present sentiments, and confirm my present conviction.

"My unbelief and aversion to religion were founded neither on an accurate inquiry into its truth, nor upon a critical examination of those doubts that are generally raised regarding it. They arose, as is *usual in such cases*, from a very general and superficial knowledge of religion on one side, and much inclination to disobey its precepts on the other; together with a readiness to entertain every objection against it."

Of the calm and gradual manner in which this state of mind (alas! so common among infidels) was exchanged for sober conviction, Struensee thus spoke towards the close of his life, when the happy change had been fully accomplished. "I knew that I must expect a clergy-

(worthy of the emphatic eulogy of Johnson on Burnet's conversion of Rochester) has not been translated."

* Of the authenticity of this document Dr. Münter says "It was written on sheets of paper furnished by the government, and signed by its functionaries as received from the prisoner;" and as to its *spontaneous* nature, "it was entirely drawn up in his instructor's absence, and delivered to him sheet by sheet, as finished, and carefully preserved by him."

man to attend me by order of government; I therefore resolved to receive him civilly, and to hear him with decency and composure. I intended to declare to him, at the end of the first visit, that if he were ordered to see me frequently, he should be welcome; but I should beg of him not to entertain any hopes of converting me; for I was too well convinced of my own opinion, and should, therefore, never enter into any useless disputations. When you came, my dear friend, I immediately perceived that you had no intention to declaim to me in the style of a preacher, or to fill me with fears and terrors, and inflame my imagination. You only desired me, since the matter was of so great consequence, to examine into my own principles, and the evidence for Christianity. I found this reasonable, I had time to do it, and fancied I should, by this inquiry, discover that Christianity had no foundation, and convince myself more strongly of the truth of my principles.

"We began our conferences with great coolness; I read the books you gave me, though with diffidence, yet with attention. This did not continue long; and I could not help perceiving I had been mistaken. It can scarcely be believed how much it has cost me to acknowledge my error, with regard to myself, as well as with regard to you. It was a great victory over myself, to confess that my former principles were false. But" (and the admission carries peculiar weight from the lips of a convert, assuredly not easily "turned from darkness to light") "my conversion is, by the grace of God, thoroughly brought about. I have now examined Christianity with greater exactness than I ever did my old system; and by this examination I am convinced of its truth. I have done so while in health, and with all the reason I am master of. I tried every argument;

I have taken my own time, I have not been in haste. I therefore will remain firm; neither my former principles nor new doubts shall henceforth stagger me."

Such were the resolutions of an intellect naturally strong, and peculiarly acute, as to the results of Christianity, thoroughly investigated, on the mind. Of its influence (more wonderful far) on the proud heart of one, utterly rebellious till then, under the teaching of misfortune, many affecting proofs are scattered over those interesting conversations, which, to be fully appreciated, should be read as a whole. It may be a guide to others in dealing with the infidelity which is fostered in the heart by immorality of life, to learn that it was by the pure precepts of the Gospel, and the morality of its blessed Founder—and the misgivings excited by their contrast with his own convenient maxims, and consequent profligacy of conduct—that Struensee was first led to admit their probably heavenly origin, and to give to the external evidences of Christianity his willing, nay, anxious consideration. His natural candour, and an amiableness of disposition which, however obscured by the errors of prosperity, manifested itself in the most affecting concern for the sufferings he had been the means of bringing on his friends, add peculiar interest to the steps of a "passing from death unto life," whose progress has seldom, if ever, been so minutely, as well as affectionately, detailed. And yet the reverend instructor dealt faithfully and conscientiously with his strange pupil, never extenuating (nor, indeed, was the penitent himself inclined to do so) his past flagrant vices; nor suffering him for a moment to substitute compunction or penitence for the sole ground of Christian hope—redemption through Christ. When he had brought him fully to embrace this, "there ensued," says Dr. Münter, "a scene which was moving to me

beyond description. Never felt I such joy. Never have I been so sure of the happiness of having brought back a sinner from his errors! I shall never forget this solemn and joyful hour, and never cease to praise God for it."

One of the first and legitimate fruits of this apparently most sincere and deep conviction of the importance of religion manifested itself in concern, no longer for the temporal welfare merely, but spiritual condition of his former friends. "He wished much that those who had been seduced by him from virtue might have the same advantages." He said he had in this respect Count Brandt particularly in view, and added, "I hear that he is still very gay, but I imagine it would make a greater impression on his mind if he were told how my sentiments are altered. Though he has not been more virtuous than I have, yet he always had a better opinion of religion than I had. Would you be so kind as to go to him, and tell him how you find me, and beg him to be now at last a little more serious?" "I rather proposed," says Dr. Münter, "that he should charge the clergyman in attendance on Count Brandt with the message, and asked, 'Are you ready and inclined to do this?'" "Yes," said he, "bring Dean Hee to me, and I will beg this favour of him in your presence. I am not ashamed to confess what I am so well convinced of. I wish I had an opportunity to tell it to all my former acquaintance. Formerly I would not hearken to Count Brandt, when he sought opportunity to speak to me of religion. I think it therefore doubly a duty to let him know my present sentiments; since I have been accessory to his misfortunes. His condition grieves me so much, that I would willingly contribute all in my power towards his reformation."

On Dean Hee paying him the requested visit, he told

him minutely how he had first quitted virtue, and then abandoned religion; and in what manner he had been recovered from his errors. His affecting solicitude was not lost upon Count Brandt, who, spite of great natural levity of disposition, had never been without a sense of religion; and who sent him in return his free forgiveness for all the evils he had drawn him into.

Struensee's amiable solicitude for the companion of his prosperity and misfortunes, seems long to have survived all anxiety respecting himself; and he could never forgive himself for having "kept Brandt from withdrawing from Copenhagen when he might have done so."

Another and yet tenderer earthly tie remained to be severed before the penitent could depart in peace. His virtuous and truly Christian parents survived, to add to the anxiety and terror with which they had learned his giddy elevation, the cruel tidings of his ignominious fall. From his father, a most highly respected and eminent divine, who, long previous to his son's favour, had risen by his own merits to the important situation of general superintendent (or bishop) of Schleswick and Holstein, he had, early in his confinement, received a heart-rending letter, some extracts of which will show how its perusal (which he was unable to finish), must have racked his then unsubdued heart and accusing conscience.

"The grief and anxiety of your parents on account of their sons,* I am not able to express. Our eyes swim in tears day and night. Our souls cry for mercy to God without ceasing. There is but one thing which lies heavy upon my soul, and that of your much afflicted mother. You know our sentiments. You knew our intention when we educated you. You remember how

* A brother of the Count had been arrested with him.

often and how seriously we inculcated this great truth, that 'Godliness is profitable unto all things.' As often as I had opportunity to speak to you, even when you were a public character, I reminded you of the Omnipresent God, and exhorted you to be careful in preserving a good conscience. Your own heart will tell you how far you have lived up to the exhortations of your father.

"It is already a long while that your parents have been in great anxiety about you. Since we lead a very retired life, and you have ceased to write about your circumstances, the prayers and sighs of our straitened hearts have ascended to God in secret; and in our agony we cried that your soul might not be lost. Three different times, at Halle, Gedern, and Altona, you were looked upon as a dead man, by those who stood about your sick bed. God has saved you, and preserved your life, certainly with that only intent, to prepare you, in this season of grace, for a happy eternity. This is now the chief intention of your gracious Redeemer in your person. You are his creature, he loves you, you are redeemed by the blood of Jesus. God is a reconciled father; return then to your God, my son, he will not hide his gracious countenance from you. When you shall feel your sins to be a heavy burden, your heart will then humiliate itself before God; you will pray for mercy, and you will seriously detest and abhor your transgressions. You will then see the great importance and necessity of the redemption of Christ. You will then take refuge with Him who receives sinners, who was made to be sin for us, who has paid the debt of our sins, and suffered their punishment, that we might have forgiveness, according to the riches of his grace. The blood of Christ still speaks for you. He that is merciful yet stretches forth his hands. Without Jesus there

is no salvation—oh that he might be glorified in your heart! In him we have happiness whilst we live, whilst we suffer, whilst we die—and after death itself!

"Your mother gives her love to you. She weeps, she prays with me for our unfortunate children. My son, my son, how deeply do you afflict us! O could we but have this comfort, that our sons turned with all their heart unto the Lord; and that we with joy might find them again in eternity before the throne of the Lamb! Your crimes, which brought you into prison, are not sufficiently known to us. But though we love our children, we nevertheless cannot approve their crimes, nor excuse nor palliate them; we can only praise God when he shall show mercy to the repenting sinner. The Lord our God be your physician in your imprisonment, and heal thoroughly the wounds of your soul. We, your parents, recommend you to the Lord that has mercy on you. Yea, Jesus! thou great friend of mankind, who wilt in no wise cast out him that comes unto thee, help parents and children to life everlasting!"

It would be difficult to refrain from ascribing, at least in part, to the prayers and example of parents thus eminently pious (for a letter from his disconsolate mother breathes sentiments equally religious and affecting), the singular and decided change which had taken place, not only in their son's opinions, but in his entire character and feelings; and which he expressed with touching humility in the following letter, to be delivered after his death. It ran thus:—

"Your letters have increased my pain, but I have found in them that love which you always expressed for me. The memory of all that sorrow which I have given you by living contrary to your good advice, and the great affliction my imprisonment and death must

cause you, grieve me the more, since, enlightened by the truth, I see clearly the injury I have done. With the most sincere repentance I beg your pardon and forgiveness. I owe my present tranquillity to my belief in the doctrine and redemption of Christ. Your prayers and good example have contributed much towards it. Be assured that your son has found that great good which you believe to be the only true one. Look upon his misfortunes as the means which made him obtain it. All impressions which my fate could make upon you, will be weakened by this, as it has effaced them with me. I recommend myself to your farther intercession before God. I pray incessantly to Christ my Redeemer, that he may enable you to bear your present calamities. I owe the same to his assistance. My love to my brothers and sisters. I am, with all filial respect," &c.

"Next day," continues the doctor, "I came with Lieutenant-General Hoben, who, at my request, was present at his receiving the Sacrament; and this man, who received his sentence of death without any alteration of mind was, during the whole time of this sacred transaction, as if he were melting into tears. I never observed a tear in his eye as often as we were talking about his misfortunes and death; but on account of the moral misery into which he had thrown himself and others, and the love of God, he has wept more than I myself could have believed, had I not seen it."

Resigned and even cheerful had Struensee of late become on the subject of his own fate, now rapidly approaching. Dr. Münter says he had now for weeks past been blessed with unfeigned tranquillity of mind, which appeared to him more striking, the nearer the time of his death advanced. His deportment on receiving his sentence is thus described. "He was

speaking of several things which concerned his heart, of his affections towards his parents and family, (he had shortly before taken a most affecting leave of his brother, whose probable escape from his own fate was a great relief to his mind,) when his counsel came into the room to acquaint him with his condemnation. 'Good Count!' said he, 'I bring you bad news.' He then pulled a copy of the sentence out of his pocket.

"'I expected,' said the Count, 'nothing else; let me see it.' He read; I fixed my eyes upon him with great attention, but I did not observe the least alteration in his countenance. After he had read it, he gave it to me. While I was reading it and trembling, he began to talk with composure to his counsel, and asked with eagerness respecting the fate of Count Brandt. On learning that his sentence was exactly the same, and that his counsel had been unable to procure its mitigation, the Count was more moved at this than at his own fate. When we were alone, I assured him of my sincere compassion, and exhorted him to suffer with the patience and submission of a Christian.

"'I assure you,' said he 'I am very easy about that. Such punishments should make an impression upon others, and therefore they ought to be severe. I had prepared myself for this, and more. I thought I might, perhaps, be broken on the wheel, and was already considering whether I could suffer this sort of death with firmness. If I have deserved it, my infamy would not be removed though those disgraceful circumstances were not annexed to it. And upon the whole, what is honour or infamy in this world, to me. My judges had the law before them, and therefore they could not judge otherwise. I confess my crimes are great. Many things I might not have done, had I been sufficiently acquainted with the law. But why did I neglect it?'"

To the sentence itself, we must now revert. Count Struensee was pronounced guilty of having embezzled from the King's coffers near six *lors* of gold, or £125,000 sterling; of having expedited many orders from the cabinet without the King's knowledge; of an unbecoming familiarity with the Queen; of having secreted several letters which should have been laid before the King; of having counselled the King to disband his guards; of forging and falsifying a draft, and of suspicious arrangements in the city.

Count Brandt was declared guilty of having been privy to Struensee's free intercourse with the Queen, and all his other supposed crimes, without divulging them; of having laid violent hands upon the King's person, and also of evil designs against his Majesty.

That these charges were vague and frivolous, and could never, especially in the case of Count Brandt, have been construed into capital crimes, except by a tribunal determined on his destruction, is sufficiently obvious. But their futility is rendered still more apparent when it is explained that the treasonable attempt on the King's life, which formed the head and front of this unhappy minion's offence, consisted in having engaged, expressly to gratify his royal master's propensity to pugilism, in a wrestling or boxing encounter, in which he had the misfortune slightly to wound his antagonist; though the trifling injury was not only freely forgiven at the time, but the culprit continued as before in the enjoyment of the sovereign's favour.

These several accusations, however, put together, were considered as amounting to high treason, and punishable by the Danish law with forfeiture, confistion, and death. The sentence of Struensee ran thus:—

"John Frederick Struensee has (agreeable to the

Danish statute law, book vi. chapter iv. article 1, for his crimes, forfeited his honour, estate, and life. His coat-of-arms shall be broken by the common executioner. His right hand shall be cut off, and afterwards his head; his body shall be quartered, and exposed on a wheel; his head and hand to be placed on a pole, and fixed over the gates."

A like sentence was passed on Count Ernevoldt Brandt. In consequence of this rigid decree they were executed on the 28th of the same month (April), at eight in the morning, before the east gate of the city of Copenhagen, in the centre of a field, on a scaffold erected for the purpose.

The deportment of Count Brandt, who suffered first, was quite in conformity with the accounts already given of his reckless and daring character, and thoughtless behaviour while in prison. "He showed," says a contemporary narrative, "great heroism, and almost unparalleled coolness while his hand was cut off, and went through the rest of his sentence with amazing intrepidity; making a speech to the bystanders, protesting his innocence, and declaring his accusers suborned and perjured. His head was then exposed various times to the view of the spectators. He was attended by a Lutheran minister, but gave no sign of fear or contrition." *

Very different, and to the more unthinking multitude, perhaps less heroic, nay even pusillanimous, might have appeared the last moments of Struensee. Having with his usual frankness (even while expressing the

* It is consolatory to know, on the testimony of that honest ecclesiastic, that, notwithstanding his outward bravado, and the acknowledged levity of his earlier prison hours, Brandt had been brought to a contrite sense of his guilt before God. Yet it is impossible not to view, as in some measure characteristic of the value and solidity of the two conversions, the government tokens bestowed on the two divines employed; that to Dr. Münter being a snuff-box of *rock crystal*, while a similar gift to Dean Hee, was of *porcelain* alone!

calmest and best-grounded reliance on the Divine mercy) acknowledged to Dr. Münter a natural dread of death, which he feared might manifest itself on the scaffold, he was confirmed by the counsels of that excellent adviser in the resolution to affect neither pagan stoicism nor infidel recklessness, but to show himself exactly as he felt; and meet death, not with the triumphant front of innocence, but the meekness of repentant guilt and the serenity of a pardoned offender.

Their final conversation, like all those which had preceded it, is well worthy of detailed perusal. Its most striking features only can be given here.

"I look," said the dying penitent, "upon the reconciliation of man through the death of Christ, as the only means of receiving forgiveness of sins. Everything else which is believed to serve the same purpose is insufficient. Whoever will not adopt and make use of this redemption, declares that he will neither be virtuous nor fear God; for he rejects the strongest motives which God could ever propose to mankind to fear him and love virtue. I know what God has done for me, and what it has cost Christ to procure my salvation; and I look upon my death, and all those awful circumstances that are to attend it, as things which God found necessary for my good."

With these sentiments, to which the total absence of hypocrisy in his character, as well as the testimony of the most credible of witnesses, and his own still extant and memorable confession, lend the stamp of undoubted genuineness, did this once hardened sceptic and libertine proceed to meet the fate, whose justice he acknowledged, and whose details can never be so interestingly given as in the words of his faithful and indefatigable, and now deeply affected spiritual guide.

"The door of the prison," says Dr. Münter, "now opened, towards which the Count never, but I very often,

had looked with a fearful expectation. An officer came in, and desired me, if I pleased, to step into the coach, and go before the Count to the place of execution. I was much moved. The Count, as if it did not concern him in the least, comforted me by saying,

"'Make yourself easy, my dear friend, by considering the happiness I am going to enter into; and with the consciousness that God has made you a means of procuring it for me.'

"I embraced him, recommending him to the love and mercy of God, and hastened to the place of execution. He, being soon afterwards called, got up from his couch, and followed those who were to conduct him. Coming out of the prison, and getting into the coach, he bowed to those who were standing around. Upon the way to the place of execution, he partly spoke to the officer who was with him, partly sat in deep meditation.

"As soon as both the condemned were arrived, in their respective coaches, near the scaffold, and Count Brandt had mounted it first, I got into the coach with Struensee, and ordered the coachman to turn round, to prevent his having a prospect of the scaffold.

"'I have seen *him** already,' said he. I could not recollect myself so soon, and he, observing my uneasiness, said, with a smiling countenance, 'Pray, do not mind me. I see you suffer. Remember that God has made you an instrument in my conversion. I can imagine how pleasing it must be to you to be conscious of this. I shall praise God with you in eternity that you have saved my soul.'

"I was still more affected than before, and said, that

* It is pleasing to trace, in this *unselfish* expression, at a moment when all dissimulation ceases, a touching relic of the deep and *paramount* concern Struensee had experienced for the friends he had involved in ruin.

I should look upon this transaction of mine as the most remarkable one during my whole life, since God had blessed it with so self-rewarding a success. It was a pleasing thought to me, that we should continue our friendship in a future world. I should have comforted him, but he, in this case, comforted me. He then desired me to remember him to several of his acquaintance, and to tell some of them, that if he, by his conversation and actions, had misled them in their notions of virtue and religion, he, as a dying man, acknowledged the injury he had done, begged them to efface those impressions, and to forgive him.

" On seeing the great number of spectators, I told him that among those thousands were many who would pray to God to have mercy on him. ' I hope so,' said he, ' and the thought pleases me.' He soon after added, ' It is a solemn sight to see so many thousands of people together; but what are these thousands, when compared with the whole sum of God's creatures, and how very little appears one single man in such a comparison! Nevertheless, God loves every individual man so much, that he has procured his salvation by sacrificing his own Son. What a love is this!'

" Though I could not see the scaffold, yet I guessed, from the motion among the spectators, that it was Struensee's turn to mount it. I endeavoured to prepare him for it by a short prayer, and within a few moments we were called. He passed with decency and humbleness through the spectators, and bowed to some of them. With some difficulty he mounted the stairs. When we came up, I spoke very concisely, and with a low voice, these words of Christ, ' He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.' It would have been impossible for me to speak much, or aloud, had I attempted it.

"I observe here that he showed not the least affectation in his conduct on the scaffold. It was that of one who knew he was to die, on account of his crimes, by the hands of the executioner. He was pale, it was difficult for him to speak, the fear of death was visible in his countenance; but at the same time submission, calmness, and hope, were expressed in his air and deportment.

"His sentence was read to him, his coat-of-arms publicly exhibited, and broken to pieces. During the time that his chains were taking off, I put the following questions to him, 'Are you truly sorry for all those actions by which you have offended God and man?'

"'You know my late sentiments on this point, and I assure you they are at this very moment the same.'

"'Do you trust in the redemption of Christ as the only ground of your being pardoned before God?'

"'I know *no other* means of receiving God's mercy; and I trust in this alone.'

"'Do you leave the world without hatred or malice against any person whatsoever?'

"'I hope nobody hates me personally, and my sentiments on this head are the same as I told you just before.'

"I now laid my hand upon his head saying, 'Then go in peace whither God calls you! His grace be with you!'"

"He then began to undress, and inquired of the executioners how far he was to uncover himself, and desired them to assist him. He then hastened towards the block, that was stained, and still reeking, with the blood of his friend, laid himself quickly down, and endeavoured to fit his neck and chin properly into it. When his hand was cut off, his whole body fell into

convulsions.* The very moment when the executioner lifted up the axe, I began to pronounce slowly the words 'Remember Christ crucified, who died, but is risen again.' Before I had finished these words, both hand and head, severed from the body, lay at my feet!"

* * * * * *

It is impossible to follow to the tragical close of his singular career, a man whose name has become inseparably blended with the history of a kingdom, and the destinies of a queen, without echoing the remark of his clerical biographer, that if his political schemes had been crowned with success, posterity might have hailed him as the Solon of Denmark, and his private vices, great and undeniable as they were, might have been forgotten in the fame attendant on successful statesmanship. His sudden fall from power, and ignominious death, on the contrary, while they have led to his being handed down to future generations as a profligate adventurer, proved to himself (and it is hoped to others also), the happy instruments of a transition equally striking, and far more important, from a hardened and reckless infidel, to a penitent and devout Christian.

The malice of the enemies he had so fully and frankly forgiven, found savage gratification in the exposure of the mangled remains of their lately powerful foe. Tall poles long exhibited to a shuddering public the heads of the two unfortunate Counts, whose quartered limbs were extended on wheels, beneath the ghastly skulls that bleached in the wind above them.

* On this purely physical affection have been founded (on the admission of those least favourable to his memory) some accounts representing him as struggling to escape the fatal stroke.

The trial of the Queen was meantime (with the slowness and secrecy ascribed in some of Sir R. Keith's letters to Danish judicial proceedings, and by which, on this occasion, his anxieties were evidently deeply awakened), going on. "And the Queen Dowager," says the often quoted author of the Memoirs of an Unfortunate Queen, "having attained her objects in the removal of all bars to her resumption of former ascendancy, affected to wish that the tribunal instituted to prosecute the young Queen would declare her innocent; and in order further to impose on the public, advised the King to engage the celebrated advocate Uhhldahl in this important cause, and to absolve him of his oath, that he might plead in her favour, with all the eloquence of which he was master.

"But the world would not be duped by this artifice. Whoever was acquainted with the principles and views of the King's advocate, knew that he was the soul of Juliana Maria's party, and that the secret object of the selection was to persuade the nation that if the eloquence of so able a defender could not establish her innocence, she must needs be guilty.

"Not all the florid declamations, however, and practised rhetoric of this famous pleader, thus indirectly exerted against her, could even fix a suspicion of the crimes invented to cover with infamy the unhappy Queen. All the accusations against her Majesty were destitute even of probability; and thus the nefarious plan of having the forlorn Matilda degraded and punished with death, and her children declared illegitimate, proving abortive, the Dowager, dreading at the same time the just resentment of the King of Great Britain, and of a generous nation, ever ready to succour the oppressed innocence of a princess, born and educated in her bosom,—was induced to commute her

intended sentence to perpetual imprisonment, at the extremity of the frozen deserts of Jutland."

Thus wrote, and *unchallenged*, at a period, too (that of Caroline Matilda's recent demise), when, if ever, her enemies might have come forward to blacken successfully her already tarnished fame, an unknown champion, more zealous and disinterested than the wily advocate above alluded to; and, though we may so far dissent from him as to admit that suspicion had some scope for its exercise, in the contempt for appearances unfortunately characteristic of the youthful sovereign, yet, as nothing amounting to proof could be elicited, even from perjured and suborned testimony,* the opinion (entertained and avowed throughout by her misguided consort) of her innocence, must be considered most compatible, not only with charity, but with truth.†

"The King," adds the above writer, "who was chiefly interested in this iniquitous prosecution, so far from accusing her of infidelity, and other crimes still more atrocious, declared more than once that she was worthy of a husband more disposed than himself to do justice to her charms and virtues; while the generous

* Sarti, the composer, who had been music-master to the Queen, voluntarily informed a lady of rank who met him twenty years subsequently at Vienna, that no pains had been spared to tamper with and induce him to calumniate his royal pupil; but that, so far from having any such testimony to give as had been sought to be extorted from him, her conduct—which he had ample opportunities of being acquainted with—was marked by the most perfect propriety and decorum; and he utterly repudiated the idea of her guilt.

† "The common report," says Adolphus, "was that the articles supposed to be proved were sent to London, and submitted to the examination of the most eminent civilians; who, though consulted separately, unanimously declared that the evidence, far from amounting to legal conviction, did not sanction a presumption of guilt; and they added, they did not only refuse credit to the facts as lawyers, but were obliged to disbelieve them as men."—*Adolphus's Reign of George III.*, vol. i., page 524.

avowal of his excesses and irregularities justified the indifference and disgust she had long testified towards him. If she could, during her confinement, have obtained an interview with him, it is not to be doubted that her Majesty would have compelled him to have made her due reparation for the injuries she had received. The Dowager, however, constantly prevented all intercourse between them, being certain that the Queen would have recovered her liberty, and made her enemies repent of their injustice, had she been confronted with the King." *

Letters, insisting, in the most impassioned terms, on being permitted to defend herself in a personal interview with the deluded monarch, purporting to be addressed both to him and to Sir Robert Murray Keith, are given in the publication already quoted; but as, however naturally and forcibly expressed, probability is against their having (even if genuine) been permitted to transpire, their insertion amid matter unquestionably authentic, is inadmissible.

Certain it is, however, that the exertions of the latter, either in his own person, or with her illustrious brother, on her behalf, needed not the stimulus of these pathetic remonstrances; as his correspondence, shortly to be resumed, after an interval of enforced and diplomatic silence, will sufficiently prove. That these efforts to ameliorate the condition, and effect the liberation of the royal captive, were attended with incredible

* "The King," says the same dispassionate writer already quoted, "was with great difficulty prevailed upon to sanction their measures: a moment's interview would have frustrated all their plans, and rolled back the stream of ruin upon themselves."—*Adolphus's Reign of George III.* Walpole (alluding to the proposed act of divorce) says, that if obtained, it would probably be an *unique* instance of one passed without the consent of *either party*.

difficulties, and every artifice of chicane, perhaps only enhances the merit of the indomitable champion who ultimately triumphed over both. That it was, while yet only partially successful, fully appreciated at home, the following, as well as preceding letters will show.*

SIR R. M. KEITH TO MR. KEITH.

March 6th.

My business affords me such incessant occupation that I can seldom indulge myself in the pleasure of chatting with you. I am again to dispatch a messenger to London *to-day*, who will carry this, and I wish I could add to it the assurance of as happy an issue in my affairs as the justice, moderation, and rights of my Sovereign entitle him to expect, and which my most zealous services have endeavoured to procure. I hope and believe that matters are getting into a proper train, but I speak *with diffidence in Denmark*, and what would admit of no debate in any other country, is here matter of endless chicane and difficulty. I have, indeed, had hard cards to play, but my conscience tells me that I have made the most of them, and I firmly trust that my Sovereign and my superiors will be of the same opinion. I am jaded to a degree that is not to be conceived, but my health is otherwise good. If I could shut the clasps of Hugo Grotius and all his kin for the next six months, I should be at the summit of human felicity.

* That this appreciation was not confined to the highest quarters appears from contemporary periodical articles in which, under the title of the "heroic minister," the chivalry of this subject is enthusiastically celebrated. A more touching testimony of the national sympathy for the royal captive, was given to the editor, by the gifted surviving daughter of the then Premier of England, whose very nursemaids (in common with those of humbler households) were filled with commiseration and anxiety for Queen Matilda's impending fate.

SIR R. M. KEITH TO MR. KEITH.

Copenhagen, April 25th.

DEAR FATHER,

You are, no doubt, surprised at my long silence, which I own proceeds from a very extraordinary cause, that of having *too much to say*. You have seen by the distinguished marks of favour bestowed upon me, how far, in the estimation of Royal beneficence, upright intentions supply the place of successful services. I am indeed overwhelmed with the daily tokens of goodness and condescension, which far exceed my merits or expectations. They cannot add to my zeal, but they interest every faculty of my mind, and every feeling of my heart in the success of the business entrusted to my charge. I am glad to hear from Sister Anne that you intend, as soon as the weather permits, to offer at the feet of our royal benefactor the thanks of your whole family. It is a grateful duty, and in you, dear sir, a becoming one. An old and faithful servant who, from an honourable retirement, the recompense of his labours, returns to the presence of his Sovereign with new acknowledgments for favours conferred on his children, will be heard with pleasure by the most humane of Princes. Honesty and gratitude are the fair inheritance you have entailed upon your sons, and whatever efforts can be expected from such motives, joined to the warmest zeal in the King's service, shall not be wanting.

They were at length, thanks to another vigorous and promptly-answered appeal to the long disregarded feelings of the British nation, crowned with complete success. "The English Minister," says a contemporary writer, "whom the King had created Knight of the

Bath, as an honourable recompense for his zeal, and as a mark of approbation for his conduct, received his letters of recal; and the menaces of England, which became serious, as appeared by a formidable naval armament, compelled the regency of Denmark to consent to deliver up the young Queen to Sir Robert Keith, who was appointed to accompany her into the electorate of Hanover, as the castle of Zell had been allotted her by her royal brother, for her residence."

Sir Robert Keith having obtained the requested stipulations, and a pension of £5000 a-year towards the support of her Majesty's household and dignity, all thoughts of hostility between the two kingdoms subsided.

That it was no idle threat which the British Minister held out to enforce his just demands, will appear from the subjoined official document, showing how fully prepared the British government had been to lend him their active support.

St. James's, May 1st, 1772.

SIR,

For your own information I inclose a list of the ships which were intended to enforce the demand of the Queen of Denmark's liberty, if it had been refused. Those from Plymouth would have been sailed, if the countermand had been a few hours later than it was. The others were just ready to proceed to the Downs, and the *whole fleet* would probably have, by this time, been on their way to Copenhagen, under the command of Sir Charles Hardy.

I am, with great truth and regard,
Sir, your most obedient humble servant,
SUFFOLK.

LORD SUFFOLK TO SIR R. M. KEITH.

St. James's, May 1st, 1772.
[*Duplicate.*]

SIR,

Your dispatches by King, the Messenger, have been already acknowledged; those by Pearson were received on Wednesday afternoon, and I now answer both together.

His Majesty's entire approbation of your conduct continues to the last moment of your mission, and his satisfaction has in no part of it been more complete, than in the manner in which you have stated, urged, and obtained the liberty of his sister. The care you have taken to distinguish between a claim of right, and the subjects of negociation, and to prevent the mixture of stipulations with a demand, is perfectly agreeable to your instructions.

The national object of procuring the liberty of a daughter of England, confined in Denmark, after her connexion with Denmark was dissolved, is now obtained. For this alone an armament was prepared, and therefore, as soon as the acquiescence of the Court of Copenhagen was known, the preparations were suspended, that the mercantile and marine interests of this kingdom might be affected no longer than was necessary by the expectation of a war.

Instead of a hostile armament, two frigates and a sloop are now ordered to Elsinore. One of them is already in the Downs, the others will repair thither immediately, and as soon as the wind permits, they will proceed to their destination. I inclose to you an account of them, which you may transmit to Monsieur Ostein ministerially, referring at the same time to the assurance of their pacific proceedings.

The compliance of the Danish Court with his Ma-

jesty's demand, however forced, is still a compliance. Their continuing, unasked, the style of Queen, and other concessions, and the attainment of the national object, accompanying each other, His Majesty would think it improper to interrupt the national intercourse from any personal or domestic consideration. You will therefore inform Monsieur Ostein, that his Majesty intends to have a Minister at the Court of Copenhagen, the explanation you may give of this suspension of former directions, and his determination, being left to your own discretion.

You will not be that Minister. His Majesty will have occasion for your services in a *more eligible situation.** And as soon as you have discharged your duty to the Queen of Denmark, by attending her to Stade, you will return home, either on board of his Majesty's ship which conveyed you thither, or if the passage by sea is disagreeable to you, by land with the least possible delay.

The feelings of the negociator, by whose firmness to his purpose and well-timed demonstrations the horrors of war had been averted from two kingdoms, while the object of so many anxieties had been honourably achieved, may be best gathered from his own words.

[*Strictly Confidential.*]

Copenhagen, May 4th, 1772.

My dear Anne,

After a long and painful warfare, I hope I may at last look forward with pleasure to the end of my bondage in Denmark. During the last two months, I have, from *duty and discretion*, suspended all private correspondences, because I would rather hold my

* Sir R. M. Keith kissed hands 14th August, on his appointment to *Vienna*.

tongue than seem mysterious. What my feelings have been in that period, no pen can paint; what my gratitude is, and ought to be towards the most considerate and benevolent of masters, no tongue can tell. I have not the presumption to think that I have deserved his distinguished favours and approbation, but my conscience tells me (and I listen to it with an honest exultation) that all my faculties have been invariably exerted in his service.

A ribbon and a title are pretty playthings, and I am not philosopher enough not to be flattered with them; but it is the *time* and the *manner* of bestowing them which enhance their value a thousand fold. At a moment when my mind was filled with regret for the past, affliction for the present, and anxious prospects in futurity, to find the uprightness of my intentions rated as highly, and recompensed as amply, as successful services, was equally unexpected and satisfactory. The world says that such marks of favour do infinite credit to the servant. I am sure they set the heart of the beneficent sovereign in the fairest and most amiable light. But I need not expatiate on the chapter of thankfulness. The Hermits understand that matter perfectly.

I have not yet received my ultimate orders, but I am nearly certain that they will direct me to embark at Elsinore, in the suite of her Majesty, who is to be conveyed from Cronenbourg to Stade by sea, and from thence to proceed immediately to a hunting seat of the King's in the Duchy of Lunenburgh, called the Görde, where her Majesty is to pass the summer. Her Majesty's winter residence in the King's electoral dominions will, in the mean time, be fitted up for her reception.

To demand the liberty of a captive Queen, and to

escort her to a land of freedom, is truly such a commencement of my chivalry as savours strongly of the romantic! I am heartily grieved for the occasion which has laid this duty upon your brother; but from what you know of his disposition, you will easily judge of the warmth of his zeal in the execution of a commission so well adapted to his genius. Can you figure to yourself what he must have felt in passing through the vaulted entrance of *Hamlet's Castle,* to carry to an afflicted and injured Princess the welcome proofs of fraternal affection, and liberty restored?*

I have room to hope that my royal master will not be displeased with the conclusion of this critical and delicate affair; and when I have set her Majesty safely down in the comfortable retreat which his goodness has assigned her, I shall return as soon as possible to his presence, not to claim new benefits, but to offer my services, wherever they can be judged in any degree useful. And if on my arrival in the capital, *of the best of all possible kingdoms,* I have the happiness to find my father in good health, and my brother in an honourable station,† that city (large as it is) will contain few happier men than myself. We enthusiasts have, now and then, such moments as surpass all the enjoyments of wiser and graver men; and, to say the truth, we earn them dearly!

May 5th.

I am so prodigiously tired of this town, that I count

* The emotion was reciprocal. "When the English minister at Copenhagen," (Sir Robert Murray Keith) says Coxe, "brought the order for her enlargement, which he had obtained by his spirited conduct, she was so surprised with the unexpected intelligence, that she burst into a flood of tears, embraced him in a transport of joy, and called him her deliverer."

† Admiral Sir Basil Keith, shortly afterwards appointed to the government of Jamaica.

the hours till my deliverance is completed. In this I am guilty of no ingratitude, since, in the long eleven months I have sojourned in it, I never met with a single glimpse of cordiality or kindness from a native of it. I know that I stand well in *this* public opinion; but I cannot find in my heart to be proud of it. Fire and water are not more opposite in their natures than these people and your brother; yet he may honestly say, that far from doing harm, or even wishing it, to any one individual, he has rendered the bulk of them essential service. I claim little merit in this; my motives were independent of every national consideration, and there is nothing very flattering in the earnest desire I have to quit them for ever. The Lord knows where I shall pitch my tent next, but I pray that it may be among a nation of warm feelings; for cold and callous hearts are to me worse than poison. But enough of these people, against whom I have no rancour, and with whom I have no more intimacy than with the inhabitants of Siam. And now for affairs nearer home. You will easily guess what a ruinous trade I drive, furnishing a house, and setting up a family, *once a year*, and then selling off at an hour's warning, and a quarter price. But my master is as generous as he is humane, and will secure me a competence somewhere; and let me tell you, sister Anne, that however scanty may be my worldly means, I have a set of kind comrades and dear creatures, not one of whom I would part with for Lord Clive's Jaghire. In the estimation of common sense and sound reason, I am literally one of the richest men you know, and my wealth is doubled by the just sense I have of its superior value. Every man should cast up his accounts this way, and we should have less grumbling about *certain metals*, which we Keiths have the pride to look down upon.

May 9th.

I am, my dear sister, in the very agony of expectation, seeing that in all probability I may look for my complete clearance in the course of twice twenty-four hours. To get honourably released from such business as I have had in hand, and happily out of Denmark, are matters of the highest moment, and (as the ingenious Mr. John Home says) I stand at present upon the very "isthmus" of the critical instant. Yet I have no anxieties about *self*, and if my worthy sovereign is pleased, I am more than rewarded. And now, dear Anne, I must lay you aside, as the chit-chat companion who leaves the room when men of business enter.

May 15th.

My frequent journeys to Elsinore, to pay my duty to the Queen, have prevented my continuing this; but I now take up the pen to acquaint you that my ultimate orders have arrived, and are such as I expected. The most honourable testimony of my gracious Sovereign's approbation of my whole conduct accompanies them, and completes my satisfaction. In about eight days we may expect the convoy, and her Majesty will embark immediately. The King has had the goodness to order that the "Southampton" man-of-war shall convey me from Stade to England, if my health permits my continuing the voyage by sea. Poverty calls loudly for my preferring this conveyance, by which a large sum will be saved, and, *for once*, I will do my best to listen to her advice. Yet if I am as sick as I have constantly been on board ship, I do not answer for my perseverance. But adieu, Mrs. Anne, I have business with your betters. *Apropos*—put me in mind to give you an account of my travels in Sweden, where I was about a fortnight ago. A kingdom more or less is but a trifle in the peregrinations of such a knight-errant as I am;

yet it may be uncivil to the memory of that romantic hero, Charles XII., to pass his realms over in silence.

May 19*th.*

I really believe that all my home correspondents have taken it into their heads that I departed from Denmark by some aërial conveyance, for the deuce a line do I receive but from my worthy superiors, and their epistles (though *inimitable in their way*), are politics, politics, and of them my mind is already brim full. Oh! for a sheet of female nonsense to refresh my spirits, and sweeten the labours of a plenipo! Doctor —— brought me a pretty little restorative of my father's handwriting, and the dose, though small, did me a world of good. If these obstinate easterly winds would relent, I might be looking out for my little armada, and in eight-and-forty hours after I might set out to plough the watery main. "To plough! to p—ke! aye, that's the rub!" Yet, to say the truth, this is a country from whose bourne no traveller departs with sorrow. *I*, at least, shall not be that sorrowful traveller, and if ever I set foot—but mum; I mean harm to nobody; but I long for St. Paul's!

What an awkward figure shall I make amidst the lively and laughing friends I am preparing to meet with! The muscles of my physiognomy have (to the best of my knowledge) lost their risible faculty, for when they were last tried in that way is truly past my remembrance. But I'll take a month's *private lessons of Tatty*, and leave the rest to Nature. This long manifesto of mine begins to grow very ancient, but be of good cheer, my dear Anne, the messenger shall mount his steed on Saturday, and carry with him the last shreds of my negotiation. You have heard that the Swiss die of the *maladie du pays*. I am no Swiss, but I pine prodigiously, and grow almost as lean as sister Janet. Remember, I make a bargain with you

all, Hermits and others. For the first twelve months I will not permit my mind or memory to peep over into the Danish islands in quest of answers to your idle questions. I give you *carte blanche* as to all my other kingdoms, as Hungary, Bohemia, Prussia, Sweden, and Electorates and Republics without end. These are food for the curiosity of one year at least, and I only desire to let the descendants of Hengist and Horsa rest in peace. Adieu.

May 21*st.*

The last post brought me yours. What you say of being so long in the dark as to everything beyond my bare existence, is very true, but I repeat to you that no part of my duty was more necessary (or more painful) than the silence I persisted in to all private correspondents. Discretion is not a very common quality, even among ministers, but I am morally certain that the persons more immediately concerned in this delicate affair are highly satisfied with that part of my conduct. Their approbation is carried down to the last moment, and in the strongest terms.

Elsinore, May 24*th*, 1772.

Here I am, my dear Anne, thank my stars, upon the utmost verge of Denmark. My ships are not yet arrived; but a few days may conclude the whole affair, and the weather is mild and agreeable. I return to Copenhagen this evening, but only for a day or two, to wind up my bottoms, and give my parting advice to the little secretary, in whose success as a *chargé d'affaires* I take a particular interest. I know nothing of my own future distinction; but I must be a gainer by every possible change. I am just returned from her Majesty, who is, Heaven be praised! in perfect health, notwithstanding the danger she has run of catching the measles from the young princess, whom she never quitted during

her illness. A more tender mother than this Queen never was born in this world.

As the sole alleviation which, during long months of harassing anxiety regarding her own fate and that of others (for it was not till late in April that the trials terminated), the royal captive of Cronenbourg enjoyed, was derived from maternal tenderness towards the infant sharer of her imprisonment, we gladly beguile the dreary interval, by giving, from a living high Danish authority, the following pleasing account of the nursling, to whom a mother thus circumstanced must have clung with tenfold affection, and to her cares for whom her now valueless life had nearly fallen a premature sacrifice; * glad thus perhaps to have been spared the parting agony which, when torn asunder by relentless man, left in the parent's breast a pang not to be stilled but by the leaden hand of death.

"Respecting the little Princess Louisa Augusta, who at the age of nine months was torn from the arms of her unhappy mother on her departure from Cronenbourg, she was brought back to Copenhagen, and educated with her brother, our late king. The most tender affection united these orphans, and when, as Crown Prince, at the age of seventeen, he took his place in the *Statsröd*, dissolved it, and by that means procured us the long desired counter-revolution, and became sole regent of the kingdom, his sister took the place by his side. She was enthusiastically beloved by the Danish nation, she was both beautiful and amiable, and we appeared to honour the memory of Carolina Matilda, by transferring the love we had borne her to her beloved daughter.

"She remained at court some years after her marriage

* By taking from her the measles during their joint incarceration.

with the Duke of Augustenbourg. After that period she lived in entire seclusion in her family circle, and only died two years ago. She had three children, of whom the youngest is our present beloved Queen, who is an ornament to the throne, and adorned with every womanly virtue. She inherits the beauty and amiability of her grandmother, but, happily, not her misfortunes."*

If the negociator, as we have seen, pined for emancipation from a scene which, under different auspices, would probably have presented to him a widely differing aspect, the longings for release of the captive Queen are thus described by a contemporary writer.

"Ever since she had received the joyful tidings of her unexpected deliverance, she walked most part of the day on the ramparts of the castle, in order to descry the British pendant. She was at dinner when the reciprocal salute of the English frigate and the castle guns informed her Majesty of Captain MacBride's arrival. This gallant officer met on shore Sir Robert Keith, who, after a mutual exchange of compliments, introduced the Captain to her Majesty, by whom he was most graciously received, as the man destined to convey her safe to her royal brother's electoral dominions; far from the reach of the poisonous shafts of her enemies, and that land which had been the dismal scene of her unparalleled misfortunes and humiliations. When the Captain had notified his commission, and said that he should await her Majesty's time and pleasure, she exclaimed, in the anguish of her heart, 'Ah, my dear children!' and immediately retired. It was not for an insensible monarch, nor for a throne, on which she seemed to

* It will afford a pleasing proof of the power of time in soothing political feeling, and healing the most envenomed wounds of party, that the monarch whose throne the granddaughter of Carolina Matilda so worthily shared, was himself the grandson of her rival, Juliana Maria.

have been seated, merely to be the butt of envy, malice, and perfidy, that her Majesty grieved; the excruciating idea of being parted from her dear children, and the uncertainty of their fate, summoned up all the feelings of a tender mother. She begged to see her son before both were torn for ever from her bosom; but all her Majesty's entreaties proved unsuccessful. Juliana envied her the comfort of the most wretched—that of a parent sympathising in mutual grief and fondness with children, snatched from her embrace by unnatural authority."

"A deputation of noblemen having been appointed," says the same writer, "by the Queen Dowager to observe the Queen, after her enlargement till her departure, under a fallacious show of respect for the royal personage, so lately injured and degraded,—when they were admitted to her presence, and wished her, in his Majesty's name, a happy voyage, she answered, 'The time will come when the King will know that he has been deceived and betrayed; calumny may impose for a time on weak and credulous minds, but truth always prevails in the end. All my care and anxiety are now for the royal infants, my children."

The following more detailed narrative of her emotions in parting with her infant daughter (her darling boy she was not permitted to embrace) are quite in unison with what Sir R. M. Keith has recorded of this "tenderest of mothers:"—"On the 27th of May two English frigates and a cutter having arrived at Elsinore, the 30th was fixed for the Queen's leaving Denmark. The last moments which this amiable woman spent in the Danish dominions were distressing in the highest degree. She was now under the necessity of parting from her only comfort, one of the two sole objects of her affection, her infant child, and leaving her in the hands of

her sworn enemies. She fondly pressed for some minutes the babe to her bosom, and bedewed it with a shower of tears; she then attempted to tear herself away; but the voice, the smiles, the endearing motions of her infant,* were claims that irresistibly drew her back. At last, she called up all her resolution, took her once more in her arms, with the impetuous ardour of distracted love, imprinted on the lips of the babe the farewell kiss, and returning it to the attendant, exclaimed, 'Away, away, I now possess nothing here!'

"Everything being prepared for her Majesty's accommodation on board Captain Macbride's frigate, all her Danish attendants seemed overwhelmed with grief when their kind mistress expressed her satisfaction with their services, and took leave of such as were not to be permitted to attend her. None but Sir Robert Keith, and Captain Macbride, accompanied her Majesty on board the vessel; and when she was ready to sail, the guns of that fortress in which she had been immured were fired, as the last honour paid to the most unfortunate Queen that ever sat on the Danish throne."

It is added by Archdeacon Coxe, as well as by many other authorities, that "she remained upon deck, her eyes immoveably fixed on the castle of Cronenbourg, which contained the child that had been so long her only comfort, until darkness intercepted the view. The vessel having made but little way during the night, at day-break she observed, with fond satisfaction, that the palace was still visible; and could not be prevailed upon to enter the cabin, as long as she could discover the faintest glimpse of the battlements."

The following poem was found, (written as if copied

* Now at the interesting age of nine months, and but recently recovered from a dangerous illness, during which her fond parent never quitted her.

in haste, in the hand-writing of an imperfectly educated person,) carefully preserved among the papers of Sir R. M. Keith. No other clue to its *possible* authenticity can be given.

WRITTEN AT SEA, BY THE QUEEN OF DENMARK, DURING HER PASSAGE TO STADE, 1772.

At length, from sceptred care, and deadly state,
From galling censure, and ill-omened hate,
From the vain grandeur where I lately shone,
From Cronsbourg's prison, and from Denmark's throne,
I go!
Here, fatal greatness! thy delusion ends!
A humbler lot the closing scene attends.
Denmark, farewell! a long, a last adieu;
Thy lessening prospect now recedes from view!
No lingering look an ill-starred crown deplores;
Well pleased I quit thy sanguinary shores.
Thy shores, where, victims doom'd, to state and me,
Fell hapless Brandt, and murdered Struensee!
Thy shores—where, ah! in adverse hour I came,
To me the grave of happiness and fame!—
Alas! how different then my vessel lay;
What crowds of flatterers hastened to obey!
What numbers flew to hail the rising sun;
How few now bend to that whose course is run!
By fate deprived of fortune's fleeting train,
Now "all the oblig'd desert, and all the vain;"
But conscious worth, that censure can control,
Shall 'gainst the charges arm my steady soul,—
Shall teach the guiltless mind alike to bear
The smiles of pleasure, or the frowns of care.
Denmark, farewell! for thee no sighs depart;
But love maternal rends my bleeding heart.
Oh! Cronsbourg's tower, where my poor infant lies,
Why, why, so soon recede you from my eyes?
Yet stay, ah me! not hope nor pray'r avails;
For ever exil'd hence—Matilda sails.
Keith! form'd to smooth the path affliction treads,
And dry the tear that friendless sorrow sheds;
Oh! generous Keith! protect their helpless state,
And save my infants from impending fate!

Far, far from deadly pomp each thought remove,
And, as to me, their guardian angel prove!
Yes, Julia! *now* superior force prevails,
And all my boasted resolution fails!

"Having passed the summer months in one of the electoral palaces, till the castle of Zell was ready for her Majesty's reception, she was conducted to this princely residence through an immense crowd of spectators, who wished this royal guest might long remain among them."

As, in the introduction to a recent work of fiction,* presented to the public under the auspices of a popular English author, a doubt (which the preceding *official* documents would have been alone sufficient to remove) has been cast on the fraternal interest of George III., in the misfortunes and subsequent fate of his unfortunate sister, it is with peculiar pleasure that the following letters, corroborative of his deep and continued attention to her comfort and welfare, are inserted here.

[*Private.*]

LORD SUFFOLK TO SIR R. M. KEITH.

Castle Rising, October 11th, 1772.

My dear Keith,

Though recollection does not suggest to me anything material, added to the variously extensive considerations we have discussed together, it does the real satisfaction I have had in discussing them with you; and how earnestly I wish success to everything public and private which concerns you. *You cannot be too minute and ample on all points of your mission to Zell.* A thousand little circumstances, which would, of

* The novel (translated from a Danish original, already alluded to) entitled the "Queen of Denmark."

course, be passed over on other occasions, will be interesting upon this. And I think I may venture to assure you that the more conformable your accounts are to this hint, the *better they will please*. And I hope you will permit me to remind you of the respectful manner in which I begged to be represented to her Danish Majesty.

In the character of your friend, I may be permitted to write that which ministerial pride is not supposed to admit of. Therefore let me seize this opportunity of claiming your indulgence for all the crudities, inaccuracies, and errors which want of experience, or more irremediable qualities, may expose my public correspondence to. I know it goes into candid hands. But I wish instruction, as well as indulgence, and shall think myself infinitely indebted to you for a frank communication of all your ideas upon public points.

And now Sir, once more, may all success, honour, and happiness attend you! Let our connection continue most intimate and cordial, till such time as we shall be able to do something as useful to our country, as we have already been fortunate enough to do *agreeable to our master;* and as much longer than that period (if we ever are so lucky as to reach it) as you please. Nor do you ever cease to believe me, with the highest esteem and regard, your most obedient and most faithful servant,

SUFFOLK.

SIR R. M. KEITH TO LORD SUFFOLK.

Zell, November 2nd, 1772.

MY LORD,

I arrived here on the 31st October, late in the evening, and next day had the honour of delivering the King's letter to her Danish Majesty, whom I found in

perfect health, and without any remains of pain from her late accident. In two very long audiences which her Majesty was pleased to grant me, I endeavoured to execute, with the utmost punctuality, his Majesty's command, and shall now lay before your lordship all the lights those audiences afforded me, relative to the Queen's wishes and intentions. I cannot enter upon that subject, without previously assuring your lordship that the Queen received those repeated proofs of his Majesty's *fraternal affection and friendship* which my orders contained, with the warmest expressions of gratitude and sensibility, and that nothing could be more frank and explicit than her answers to a great number of questions, which she permitted me to ask upon any subject that arose.

In regard to Denmark, the Queen declares that, in the present situation of that court, she has not a wish for any correspondence or connection there, beyond what immediately concerns the welfare and education of her children. That she never has written a single letter to Denmark since she left it, or received one from thence. That the only person belonging to that kingdom from whom she hears, lives in Holstein, and is not connected with the court.

The Queen having expressed great anxiety with respect to the false impressions which may be instilled into the minds of her children, particularly regarding herself, I thought it my duty to say that such impressions, however cruelly intended, could not, at the tender age of her Majesty's children, nor for some years to come, take so deep a root as not to be entirely effaced by more candid instructors, and the dictates of filial duty, when reason and reflection shall break in upon their minds. The Queen seemed willing to lay hold on that hope, yet could not help bursting into tears, when

she mentioned the danger of losing the affections of her children.*

Her Majesty appears very desirous to communicate directly to her royal brother, all her views and wishes in the most confidential manner; hoping to obtain in return his Majesty's advice and directions, which she intends implicitly to follow. She said, that in matters of so private and domestic a nature, it would give her much greater pleasure to learn his Majesty's intentions upon every point, *from his own pen*, than through the channel of any of his electoral servants.

It gave me great satisfaction to find her Majesty in very good spirits, and so much pleased with the palace at Zell,† the apartments of which are very spacious, and handsomely furnished. She *wishes to have an apartment fitted up in the palace for her sister, the Princess of Brunswick*, as she thinks that the etiquette of this country does not permit that princess, in her visits to Zell, to be lodged *out of the palace*, without great impropriety. Her Majesty said, that she intended to write herself to the King on this head.

The Queen told me that the very enterprising, and dangerous part, which Queen Juliana has acted in Denmark, had created greater astonishment in Brunswick (where the abilities and character of that princess are known), than, perhaps, in any other city of Europe.

Her Majesty talked to me of several late incidents at the Court of Denmark, but without appearing to take much concern in them. She mentioned, with a smile, some of the paltry things which had been sent as part of her baggage from Denmark, adding, that this new

* An apprehension happily never realised. Her memory was affectionately cherished throughout life, by both.

† On first approaching it, and seeing the preparations made for her royal accommodation, she exclaimed, "Thank God! my brother still considers and treats me as a Queen!"

instance of their meanness had not surprised her.* But the Princess of Brunswick, who happened to be present when the baggage was opened, expressed her indignation at that treatment in such strong terms, that she (the Queen) could not help taking notice of it in her letters to the King.

She let me understand that a small collection of English books would be very agreeable to her; leaving the choice of them entirely to the King.

Her Majesty more than once expressed how much she considered herself obliged to the King's ministers, for the zeal they had shown in the whole of the late unhappy transactions relating to Denmark and to herself. She is particularly sensible of the great share your lordship had in all those affairs; and has commanded me to convey to your lordship her acknowledgments for that constant attention to her honour and interests, which she is persuaded the King will look upon as an additional mark of your lordship's dutiful attachment to his royal person and family.

It only remains that I should beg your forgiveness for the great length to which I have swelled this letter. The only excuse I can offer arises from my ardent desire to execute the King's orders with the utmost possible precision.

I am, &c. &c.

R. M. Keith.

* As a proof of the lofty and magnanimous disdain which (on the contrary) had influenced the British Princess to decline retaining the trappings of her Danish slavery, we quote a dispatch on the subject (the last addressed to Sir R. M. Keith):—

"His Majesty does not see any objection to his sister's receiving the jewels you mention, which were formerly given, and are now intended to be delivered to her. Her Danish Majesty will thereby only retain a *property*, not accept a present; and there seems no occasion for rejecting the attention voluntarily offered. But if the Queen of Denmark is *very averse* to the proposition, his Majesty does not wish to *control her inclination*."

Before entering on the pleasing details of the brief interval of serene repose, if not unmixed happiness, which was, for two short years, the portion of the exiled Queen, it may gratify the interest which it is hoped her chivalric champion has awakened in the reader's mind, to close with the following extract, for the present, his familiar correspondence with his family:—

London, 1772.

DEAR ANNE,

There are situations which beggar all definition, and luckily stand in need of none. Such is mine at present, and I need not tell you from what a variety of concurring circumstances, I claim a title to be looked upon as the happiest man in this wide capital. My ambition is more than satisfied, my heart is completely so. The beneficent master I serve, has gone beyond my utmost wishes; yet, of all the obligations he has laid upon my mind, the manner in which they are conferred is undoubtedly the greatest.* I have acquitted myself hitherto with zeal and assiduity; Heaven grant that I may serve him one day with a success adequate to the measure of my gratitude.

You know already how much I am indebted to Lord Suffolk; his reception of me (a perfect stranger) was that of an old and intimate friend, and I have sworn to him and to myself, that in every event he shall find me act up to that honourable title. You have heard of

* This probably alludes to the peculiarly gracious reception of the writer by his Royal Master, the particulars of which have just been communicated to the editor by a surviving friend of Sir R. M. Keith. The obeisance customary on such occasions was prevented by the Sovereign who, saying, "No, no, Keith, it is not thus we receive our friends"—condescendingly substituted a cordial embrace for the usual kissing of hands. The circumstance, gratifying in itself, corroborates the extent and warmth of the Monarch's fraternal interest in his sister's rescue.

my future destination,* which is the most distinguished upon all accounts, and the most *agreeable in every particular to myself.* I have obtained leave to make a journey, (a short one, I am afraid), to the Hermitage, where I long to rest me a little among my family and friends. *My poor nurse* must be told of my happy arrival. Inquire into her situation, and let me know when and how I can mend it. I am delighted with the joyful meetings which await me. But adieu, for I must fly twenty miles to dinner . . . .

I have little to add to this scrawl. I meet with fresh instances of goodness and friendship every day of my life; and if I had it not in me to be sincerely grateful, I should deserve the pillory! Once more adieu. Kind love to the Hermits and their many friends, whom I hope ere long to embrace.

Having thus consigned to domestic happiness in possession, and future honourable employment in prospect, the hero (the writer fears it must be confessed) of the preceding pages, it is high time to apologise, or at least account for, the prominence given in them to his character and correspondence.

That the fond hope of thus raising to a distinguished relative, a monument slight and perishable, no doubt, yet grateful to the best feelings of human nature, formed the paramount inducement, it would be vain to deny. But with the same truth it may be added that the hope of benefiting, by thus lifting aside the veil, which for nearly a century has shrouded these familiar effusions, the rising generation of statesmen and politicians, of proving that even in diplomacy the straight path leads most directly to success and fortune—that honour and

* The embassy to *Vienna*, where the memory of his father's long sojourn was affectionately cherished.

integrity are weapons with which a high-minded soldier could sever its most intricate Gordian knots—that worthy sovereigns may be served from disinterested affection, and discerning ones rewarded by the devotedness of those in whom they place their confidence, has led (after many misgivings arising from their "strictly-confidential" tenor) to the publicity now given to the letters of Sir Robert Murray Keith.

After the dethronement of Carolina Matilda, and the death of Struensee, it required all the talent of Juliana and her party to keep the wheels of Government in motion. The finances were in the utmost disorder, trade at a stand, and Norway in such a state of popular ferment on account of an obnoxious poll-tax, as threatened a general revolt, while the sovereignty was in reality possessed and exercised by the Queen Dowager. Taking warning by the fate of Struensee, she suffered the council of state to be re-established, which, with the exception of her ancient foe and reluctant ally, Count Rantzau, was composed of persons devoted to her views. The King soon found his condition was not bettered; he had only changed keepers; and was deprived of some gratifications (perhaps properly enough) which he had enjoyed under the reign of his consort. What the court had gained in morality it lost in elegance and attraction; the graceful ease and magnificence of Versailles suddenly disappeared, and German etiquette, stiff, formal, and unbending, arose in its stead. If, however, Juliana restored the semi-barbarism of ancient German grandeur, she occasioned a greatly beneficial reduction of expense in the royal establishment. Had her ambition been bounded by this and similar reforms, and satiated by a resumption of power and influence as complete as it was unexpected, this princess (whose tact if not her ability, was proved by

a judicious subsequent choice of ministers) might have lived down calumny, and stifled, by a wise and temperate use of renewed dominion, the relenting feelings of sympathy soon manifested by the nation towards her unhappy victim.

Her first step, on the contrary, was one calculated to corroborate and confirm all the rumoured designs of family aggrandisement ascribed to her from the birth of her own son; for whose appointment as Regent during the minority of his nephew, the infant Crown-prince, she secured a majority of votes in the council. As, however, without the concurrence of Count Rantzau she durst not risk the undertaking, he is said (on the authority of the MS. before quoted) to have been invited, with circumstances of great form and courtesy, to a secret conference in the palace, now inhabited by Queen Juliana,—whence he had so cruelly and treacherously ejected his former friend and royal benefactress,—for the purpose of sounding him on the meditated appointment.

The account of the transaction, for the accuracy of which the translator of the MS. pledges himself, is quite in keeping with the well-known vacillation and inconsistency of that unprincipled statesman, who, foiled in his hopes of rising to supreme power on the ruins of the friend whom he had, at the eleventh hour, fruitlessly endeavoured to warn, and twice out-manœuvred by the woman, whose tool he now perceived he was about once more to become,—sacrificed ambition to revenge; and by denouncing, as "more treasonable against the King than all the crimes imputed to Struensee" the projected nomination, frustrated for the moment the plan of Juliana, and anticipated by a voluntary self-banishment the order for exile which his contumacy had called forth.*

* A letter from Copenhagen mentions that the greater part of those persons who were chiefly assisting in the revolution of the 17th January

Notwithstanding the efforts of the narrator (with whom the Count is evidently a favourite) to invest with an air of chivalrous loyalty this resistance to the domination he had assisted its possessor in usurping, it is impossible not to rejoice in the frustration of his own ambitious hopes; not to feel (as an honest skipper, grateful for the benefits of Carolina Matilda, is said to have done) satisfaction in seeing the fugitive wind-bound, within view of the blackening relics of his betrayed former associates; nay, not even to do more than acquiesce in the poetic justice which caused the too well-known arrester of Carolina Matilda to perish, spite of her alleged forgiveness, by the hand of an officer devoted to her memory.

The incident regarding the rencontre with the old seaman is so honourable to the well-known benevolence and affability of the Queen, and so completely in keeping with what is elsewhere recorded of her, as well as in itself bearing the stamp of truth, that we cannot resist giving it at length, on the authority of the Danish MS. already so often quoted.

When Count Rantzau, having freighted a small vessel for the purpose, was taking his final leave of Denmark, he had food for "meditation even to madness" in the fate of those former associates and benefactors whom, without benefit to himself, or permanent good to the state, he had precipitated from power. The sight of Cronenburg castle recalled the remembrance of Carolina Matilda and her sufferings, reflected as they

last, instead of being rewarded for that important event, are either disgraced or forced to resign their employments. The first Minister of State, and General, Count Schack de Rantzau Aschberg, is removed from all his posts, but with a pension of 8000 dollars. He is to depart for his estate at Aschberg with the first packet-boat. Several more changes in the ministry have followed; likewise in the military and admiralty.—*Weekly Magazine.*

now were in his own virtual banishment. But a tack made by the skipper having brought the vessel nearer to Copenhagen, and in full view of the mangled remains of Struensee and Brandt, the Count, whose features denoted horror and surprise, sternly bade the skipper put instantly about, and on the man's humbly stating that to proceed on their voyage he must first weather a point of land called the Ness, the Count, ashamed of his weakness, flung him a ducat, and went below.

The skipper, by birth a Norwegian and a countryman of the Count's valet, showed him the ducat, saying, "What made your master start at the sight of the limbs of those men and order me to put about?" The valet, shaking his head and making no reply, the skipper continued, "Had *he* any hand in bringing them to that dreadful end? If he had, the Lord have mercy upon him; I would not have their blood on my head, for all the ducats in the world."

The valet looked the old man steadfastly in the face, and said, "Are you not Peter Neilsen, who rescued the King from the sea when he was Crown-prince." "Ay," said the blunt old sailor, "that man am I. The villain Brockdorff, I believe, (God forgive me if I wrong him), intended he should be drowned.* King Frederick, of blessed memory, gave me a handful of

* During the life of King Frederick the Fifth water-parties in the royal yacht often took place. During one of these the young Prince (afterwards Christian VII.) was more than usually wild and disorderly; neither entreaties nor remonstrances could prevail on him to be quiet. A gentleman of the household, Brockdorff by name, whose manners were not the most polished, threatened to throw him into the water unless he behaved more decently, and taking him by the arm, he was really awkward or unfortunate enough to let him fall into the water. The young Prince was rescued by a sailor, but ever afterwards it was impossible to persuade him it was not the act of his stepmother, who injudiciously confirmed his suspicions by taking Brockdorff into her service.

money at the time, and ordered I should be provided for; but I never had any provision till the good young queen chanced to hear that I had once saved her husband's life. Heaven bless her! and be her guide and protector!" continued the grateful seaman. "She sent for me, and made me tell her all about it, which I did in my homely way. The beautiful Queen shook her head, as much as to say, I know who was at the bottom of this; and so did I, though I didn't say so. So then she bade her woman tell me I should be provided for when the King came home, who was then in England; and she shook me by my coarse hand, and made her baby put its little hand in mine to thank me for having saved its father's life; and she gave me money, for I was very poor, through sickness and ill luck.

"Soon after the King returned, I was indeed sent for to the palace, and the King himself took me by the hand; but it seems his Majesty thought I had been provided for. Count Struensee was there; but he was no count then; happy for him if he never had been! He was then the King's German doctor. I could speak a little German, and he told me I was to have a hundred dollars a year for my life, so that I need never work, or go to sea again. I fell on my knees to thank the King and Queen, and told them I should die if I were not to work, nor to go to sea. They smiled when they heard this, and the King said, 'Old man, thou shalt not die if I can save thee;' so then, Doctor Struensee (God bless his soul! and may his sins be forgiven him,) said, 'A gift of a small vessel would be more useful.' 'True,' said the Queen, 'he shall have a vessel, and the pension too,' and this very yacht was the Queen's gift. Now, have not I and mine, a right to pray for my benefactress?"

On learning the name of the enemy to her peace and

fame, for whom his vessel had been freighted, the story goes on to say, that he not only pitched into the sea the ducat he had just received from him, but when paid his freight, set it aside for the poor, determined not to mix it with what he called his *honest* money.

The above anecdote derives additional authenticity, (whether, as circumstances and the *age* of the hero of the one just narrated render unlikely, they relate to the same individual, or another grateful recipient of Carolina Matilda's bounty), from an almost similar trait of disinterested attachment to the memory of a deceased benefactress, equally honourable with the above to the national character of Danish seamen, given in the "Tour of the Lady of Rank," already alluded to, as having occurred in 1796.

"On leaving Copenhagen," (after the audiences already mentioned, in which the venerable appearance and singular deportment of the King have been described), the tourist proceeds—"for Stockholm, I was accompanied by the two Dutch envoys, who were going to compliment the young King of Sweden on his marriage with the Princess of Baden; having myself been furnished with letters of introduction to the Princess Sophia Albertina, aunt to the King, from her Royal Highness the Duchess of York, who had been co-abbess of Gutemberg with her highness.* On our arrival at Elsinore, we hired two boats, one for the conveyance of our carriages, servants and luggage; the other for ourselves.

"We had scarcely set sail for Helsingborg, on the opposite coast of the Sound, the usual landing-place in Sweden, when one of the sailors, hearing us converse in the English language, thus addressed us with

* These particulars are merely given here, as lending authenticity and weight to the succeeding anecdote.

all the frankness of his profession :—'There,' said he, pointing to the castle of Cronenburg, which was distinctly seen as we cleared the port, is the fortress in which the unfortunate and persecuted Queen Matilda was shut up by that infernal old beldame Juliana Maria, who I hope is now in a place where all the water in the world will not quench the fire which surrounds her! Poor Queen Matilda, God rest her soul! she educated three of my sons and one of my daughters, for whom she had the condescension to become godmother, and who died of grief when her benefactress was exiled.* I have since that time,' continued the old man, 'entered the Swedish service, determined never to set foot in a land which I detest; since it has been so cruel and unjust towards the poor departed Queen, who was condemned on the false evidence of individuals under the horrors of the rack, because they were persuaded that if they criminated her Majesty their own lives would be saved. Poor Brandt and Struensee, they little thought that while compelled to accuse their generous Queen, they were only sealing their own destruction! I never think of those dreadful times with a dry eye; though it is now near thirty years since that horrid transaction disgraced the national character in us Danes.' And indeed there was no hypocrisy," adds the narrator, "in the old seaman's expressions, for tears actually ran down his furrowed cheeks while he thus artlessly gave vent to his feelings. On reaching Helsingborg, we made a point of inquiring relative to the old man's story, and

* That it was not in isolated cases like the above that the characteristic benevolence of the unfortunate deposed Queen was manifested, is evident from a casual notice in the periodicals of the day to the following effect: "Several charities which were instituted at Copenhagen at the instance of the late Queen Consort have, since her departure, been abolished; and the utmost disrespect is shown at Court to everything that seems calculated to support her memory."—*Weekly Magazine.*

found that there was every reason to believe in its veracity; as the officers of the customs were perfectly acquainted with the circumstances which led to his entering the service of Sweden, and spoke highly of his character. They added, 'that though frequently at Elsinore, he was never known to land, but always remained in his boat, firmly resolved not to break through his resolution.' On taking our leave of this honest son of Neptune, to whom each of the party gave some token of remembrance, we could not help contrasting his fidelity and gratitude with the conduct of those who have much greater reason to exercise those virtues; or asking each other how many of those who revel in the sunshine of royal favour would evince such sincere and heartfelt sympathy for fallen majesty."

That such or similar sentiments, however, soon resumed the ascendant in public opinion, may be gathered from the following paragraph, in a weekly journal of the time:—

"Private letters from Copenhagen say that every day witnesses fresh troubles in the state, that the many changes in the ministry cause murmurs and complaints all over the kingdom, and that the cruelties which have been exercised on some of the first nobility, by order of the Queen Dowager and her party, make her unpopular with all ranks of people."

"Denmark," says Adolphus in his history of the Reign of George the Third, "exhibited at this time a miserable spectacle of a frail government, and an imbecile sovereign. Since the banishment of Carolina Matilda, the King, too feeble in his intellects to act in any affair of state, relinquished the royal supremacy to the Queen-mother, an ambitious and designing woman, whose projects are said to have embraced the dethronement of her step-son, the exclusion of his children,

and the usurpation of his younger brother. Under her, the weak and disjointed condition of the Danish ministry rendered it contemptible in the eyes of all Europe."

A later traveller in Denmark gives, on the authority of eye-witnesses of that period of nominal sway by the puppet monarch, an anecdote, elsewhere recorded, and quite in keeping with what French memoir-writers style the sayings (when at that court) of the "foolish yet *witty* King of Denmark;" and with the occasional gleams of acuteness which flashed across the darkness of his later years.

"During the early part of Juliana's domination, and when the reins of power were yet nominally in the hands of the King, she would, for form's sake, sometimes send the public documents for his sign manual. On one of these occasions, his signature was given as follows: 'Christian the Seventh, by the Grace of God, King of Denmark, &c., in company with Juliana Maria and others, by the *grace of the Devil!*' And as no remonstrances would induce the obstinate monarch to substitute the usual form, it may be believed that his signature was henceforward dispensed with."

We the more readily return to the legitimate and ostensible subject of our memoir, the exiled Queen, that we can do so, for a time at least, with unmingled satisfaction. "This exalted sufferer," says, and truly, her anonymous biographer, "was never greater than during the latter years which she spent in her retirement. She was no longer a young unguarded princess, whose levities had given her enemies too favourable an opportunity to effect her fall. She had learned in the school of adversity, and from the malevolence of Juliana, who had misconstrued even her virtues into vices, to act with such prudence and circumspection, as to command

a personal respect independent of majesty; without being less admired for her gracious condescension, and most endearing affability. She appeared at Zell in her true and native character, divested of the retinue and pomp which, on the throne of Denmark, veiled her, in a great degree, from the inspection of impartial judges. She displayed, in her little court, all the princely and social qualities calculated to charm her visitors and attendants; there was in her person such grace and dignity as could not fail to gain her universal love. Though she excelled in all the exercises befitting her sex, birth, and station, and danced the first minuet in the Danish court, she never indulged herself in this polite amusement, of which she had been excessively fond, since the masked ball, the conclusion of which had been so fatal and disgraceful to her Majesty. As one of her pretended crimes had been the delight she took in riding, and the uncommon address and spirit with which she managed the horse, she renounced also this innocent diversion, for fear of giving the least occasion to the blame and censures of the malicious or ignorant.

"Her Majesty had an exquisite taste for music, and devoted much of her time to the harpsichord, accompanied by the melodious voice of a lady of her court. There was in her dress a noble simplicity, which exhibited more taste than magnificence. As her mind had been cultivated, by reading the works of the most eminent writers among the moderns, she read regularly two hours before dinner, with Miss Schulemberg, whatever her Majesty thought most conducive to her instruction or entertainment, in poets and historians; communicating to each other their observations, with equal freedom and ingenuity. She improved the knowledge she had acquired of the German language, and

had a catalogue of the best authors of that nation, to enable her to converse fluently on subjects of literature with men of taste and condition. As her manners were the most polished, grateful, and endearing, her Court became the resort of persons of both sexes, celebrated for their love of the fine arts. The contracted state of her finances could not restrain that princely magnificence, and liberal disposition, which made her purse ever open to indigent merit, and distressed virtue. Naturally cheerful, and happy in the consciousness of her innocence, adored and revered by the circle of a Court, free from cabals and intrigues, even the dark cloud of adversity could not alter the sweetness and serenity of her temper. There she was surrounded with faithful servants, who attended her not from sordid motives of ambition, but from attachment and unfeigned regard. They were not the spies and emissaries of an artful, imperious, and revengeful woman; or the evil counsellors of a wretched King, the first slave of his debauched and profligate Court. Peace, content, and harmony, dwelt under her Majesty's auspices, whose household was like a well-regulated family, superintended by a mistress who made her happiness consist in doing good to all those who implored her compassion and beneficence.

"Banished with every circumstance of indignity from the throne of Denmark, her noble soul retained no sentiment of revenge or resentment against the wicked authors of her fall, or against the Danish people. Ambition, a passion incompatible with enjoyment, never disturbed her peace of mind: she looked back to the diadem which had been torn from her brow with a calmness and magnanimity, which Christina of Sweden could never attain after her abdication. It was not the crown she regretted, her children only

employed all her care and solicitude: the feelings of the Queen were absorbed in those of the mother."

The genuineness of the letter subjoined by the biographer so often quoted, purporting to be from the Queen at this period (August, 1772), to her sister, the Hereditary Princess of Brunswick, there can now be no means of ascertaining. It is merely given here as containing not only a natural expression of the maternal feelings so often alluded to, but a pleasing, and perfectly correct description of the manner in which the calumniated Carolina Matilda employed her retirement from the cares, as well as pleasures (so called) of royalty, in which, only six short months before, she had been so fatally immersed, and which must now, when contemplated from this calm retreat, have appeared to her like some troubled and feverish dream.

Zell, August 27th, 1772.

DEAR SISTER,

Thanks to Heaven for having made me sensible of the futility and delusion of all worldly pomp and stately nothingness. Believe me when I tell you I have not once wished to be again an enthroned Queen. Were my dear children restored to me I should think, if there is on this earth perfect happiness, I might enjoy it in a private station with them; but the Supreme Disposer of all events has decreed that my peace of mind should be continually disturbed by what I feel on this cruel and unnatural separation. You are a tender mother, and I appeal to your own fondness. Pray give my love to the dear Augusta and all her brothers; now that she is in her seventh year, she is, I dare say, an agreeable chatty companion. As for Charles, he is, I understand, like his father, born a warrior;* nothing

* A prediction verified in the military career of the well-known Duke of Brunswick.

but drums, swords, and horses, can please his martial inclinations. George, Augustus, and William, no doubt equally contribute to your comfort and amusement. Tell them I have some little presents I shall send them the first opportunity.

You desire to know how I vary my occupations and amusements in this residence. I get up between seven and eight; take a walk in the garden, if weather permits, give my instructions to the gardener for the day, observe his men at work with that contented mind which is a continual feast, return to the castle for breakfast, dress myself from ten to eleven, appear in my little circle at twelve, retire to my apartment about one, read, or take an airing till dinner, walk again in the gardens for about an hour with the ladies of my retinue, drink tea, play upon the harpsichord, sometimes a little party at quadrille before supper, and am commonly in bed by twelve. Every Monday I receive petitions from real objects of compassion, and delight in relieving their necessities according to my power; go twice to chapel every Sunday: and thus every week passes in a regular rotation of rational conversations,—*lectures amusantes et instructives*,—musical entertainments, walks, and little curious needleworks. I see every body happy around me, and they vie with each other in proofs of zeal and affection for my person. Now I can truly say I cultivate friendship and philosophy, strangers to the throne. I expect to see you soon, according to your promise; this visit will add much to the comfort of your most affectionate sister,

CAROLINA MATILDA.

The woman who, at twenty-one, could thus write, or what is of more importance, thus act, and that for the whole remainder of a too brief existence, when released

from the trammels of etiquette, and left to follow the bent of her own inclinations, must, if ever she manifested qualities so foreign as those ascribed to her during one unhappy period, have been under the influence of a spell, which had only to be removed to restore her to her better and original self.

That a revulsion of public feeling in the favour of one so injured and amiable should ere long take place was only to be expected. "The cruel and unjust punishment," says her biographer, "inflicted on Carolina Matilda, for some indiscreet sallies of youth, was looked upon by the Danes with every allowance, for this amiable princess's endearing virtues and accomplishments filled the mind of the sensible and generous part of the nation with horror and indignation.* The King soon perceived his injustice and his error, a wretched solitary being, a prey to remorse for his conduct towards his injured consort,† whom he wished to recall, and to have once more seated on his gloomy throne; but his fickleness and imbecility made him again the sport of his step-mother's devices. Since this revolution, the state has gradually sunk into a languid inaction, torn by intestine factions, and exposed to the insult and derision of a powerful ally, become its enemy."

The hint contained in the foregoing passage, though penned in perfect unconsciousness of an event, of which

* The last letters from Copenhagen advise that the inhabitants of that city inveigh exceedingly against the execution of the Counts Struensee and Brandt; several circumstances having since appeared relative to the motives for the proceeding, which render the authors of it more and more odious to the public.—*Weekly Magazine.*

† This state of mind and feeling in the unhappy monarch is thus briefly but expressively noticed in the public prints of the day: "Advices from Copenhagen mention that the King has of late manifested an extraordinary absence of mind; and is almost continually in a state of despondency."

all Europe was ignorant till its posthumous revelation by the chief actor concerned, as to the wish entertained in Denmark, ere many years had elapsed, to recall to the throne from which she had been so cruelly precipitated, the subject of this memoir, may serve to pave the way for the singular details given by Sir Nathaniel Wraxall of the negotiations to that effect, in which he became an agent; and which were only frustrated by the sudden removal from this world of their object. And inaccurate as this writer confessedly shows himself, on some occasions, in adopting and circulating reports for which he was indebted to others, it were surely unwarrantable to suppose (even did the narrative itself less bear the stamp of truth) that, in his record of a transaction in which he was personally engaged, and which was not destined to transpire till the grave had closed over the narrator, any conceivable motive should lead him to bequeath to future generations a relation of circumstances, whose easy refutation (if untrue) by persons still alive, would brand with falsehood the memory of their recorder.*

This deeply interesting history, as exciting in its details as any chapter in romance, occurs in his Posthumous Memoirs, vol. i. p. 372, to which the reader must be referred for particulars, of which our necessarily brief *resumé* must deprive him. It is thus introduced by one whose heart and soul had evidently been in the enterprise, in the prosecution of which, he underwent hardships and disguises little inferior to those of the *preux chevaliers* of old.

* They derive great additional credibility from the residence, already alluded to, of the writer at Vienna, and his intimacy while there with Sir R. M. Keith; with whom (it is evident from frequent though *guarded* allusions in Sir N. Wraxall's letters) the matter had been talked over; and to whom the latter (who entertained for him the profoundest

"I am tempted to recount an adventure in which I was personally engaged, the nature and delicacy of which has hitherto prevented my divulging it to the world, but which I may, without impropriety, transmit to posterity. If the tragical transactions connected with Maria Antoinette must ever agitate the human mind, the history which I am to relate respects a princess, whose misfortunes and premature end, warmly interested her contemporaries, and will be perused with emotion in future times. I mean the Queen of Denmark, Carolina Matilda, consort of Christian VII., and sister of George III."

A lively personal interest in this princess having been excited in his mind by a visit to Zell (in which he had the satisfaction of communicating to her oral information respecting her beloved children, whom he had recently seen at Copenhagen), Sir Nathaniel, then a young disengaged traveller, and, as may be gathered from his writings, of a character quite fitted for political intrigue, was admirably disposed to become the agent of a party of exiled Danish nobles at Hamburg, whom the growing unpopularity of the faction which had supplanted them in Denmark, and assurance of support and success from that quarter, had led to form well-grounded plans for the restoration to power and dignity of the now again popular banished Queen.

To insure this success, two, and two only, concomitants were deemed indispensable—the consent of Carolina Matilda herself to embark in the no doubt somewhat hazardous enterprise, and her influence with her brother of England, to procure for it, *when achieved,* such assurance of support as should offer those engaged

veneration) would not have ventured to make any but an authentic communication, especially on this particular subject.

in it a guarantee against the consequences of possible *reaction*. Pecuniary aid from George III. was also a necessary condition towards its accomplishment.

The prosecution of these objects involved their willing negotiator in a series of travels by flood and field, in the midst of an inundated country, in the depth of a northern winter, to which he says all his other extensive *Tours* (so fully and graphically recorded) were as nothing. Nor is any drama, even of the Spanish school, more fertile in midnight assignations, on lonely ramparts and in solitary post-houses, nay, in the palace of royalty itself, than the romance of real life, which we thus reluctantly abridge. The most really perilous, however, of these interviews, to the success of the enterprise, was one in broad daylight, when, previous to one of the early dinners of the little German courts, it was Sir Nathaniel's somewhat nervous task to deliver in public to the Queen (in presence of her sister the Duchess of Brunswick, a witness justly dreaded by the party, as niece by marriage to the Queen Dowager of Denmark, Juliana Maria), the letter containing the proposal for that now triumphant princess's dethronement from virtual sovereignty, and the substitution in her place of the reader of the unlooked-for missive.

The heightened colour, irrepressible curiosity, and somewhat indiscreet evidences of natural emotion, betrayed by the still young and high-spirited princess (in spite of the earnest warnings conveyed in its envelope) on perusing, thus circumstanced, a document, purporting to relate to a company of *comedians*, but in reality putting a throne once more within her grasp, —are such as cannot be read without corresponding and breathless interest; or without an immediate and irresistible conviction, how easily one, incapable of dissembling, even when taught by sad experience and

misfortune, must have become a prey, in her days of reckless prosperity, to the malignant, and probably ill-founded constructions, of the enemies she unhappily despised.

Recovering, however, the royal dignity she could so well, even in adversity, assume, Carolina Matilda, in various secret interviews with the negotiator, entered on the discussion of his delicate mission with an ability, as well as propriety, which seems to have surprised, while it charmed the envoy; whom she furnished with credentials to her faithful partisans, and assurance of her readiness, at the suggestion of duty as well as inclination and maternal affection, to co-operate with the Danish nobility (at whatever personal hazard to herself), provided the consent of her brother of England —as a hospitably entertained resident in whose states, she purposely declined all attempt to quit them without his sanction—should be obtained. This she, on being made acquainted in a second interview, with their precise wishes, and stipulations, undertook to procure.

Not content with writing to her brother to enforce the appeal to his fraternal feelings, on the part of the exiled noblesse, she also wrote (anticipating that the caution of George III. would preclude his granting Sir Nathaniel a personal interview) to Lord Suffolk, who, as Secretary of State at the time of her misfortunes, and as the friend of Sir R. Keith, she justly regarded as one deeply interested in their termination; and to Baron Lichtenstein, a personal favourite of her brother's, and enjoying as such, *un*-official opportunities of discussing the subject with his Majesty, and communicating the result to Sir Nathaniel,—who, with these credentials, made a hurried and fatiguing journey to London, where he arrived 15th November, 1774.

The former nobleman being, as usual, *hors de combat*

with a fit of the gout, the business was transacted through the latter; who very cordially undertook it, and proceeded, after many tantalising delays, occasioned by the necessity of correspondence with the Queen's party, to ascertain the precise nature of their views and stipulations,—to deliver to Sir Nathaniel on the 3rd of the following February, a paper drawn up in French, containing *four articles*, expressive of the King's approbation and consent to his sister's restoration, on the following conditions:—That no act of severity, beyond simple dismission, and removal to their private places of abode, should, in the event of success, be exercised against any of the individuals actually in possession of power. That as soon as the revolution was effected, the King's minister at Copenhagen should be directed to declare that it had been done with his co-operation. By the third, though he declined making pecuniary advances for facilitating the enterprise, he guaranteed the repayment of such sums as should necessarily be expended in procuring the return of Queen Carolina Matilda to Denmark. By the fourth, he engaged that when the revolution should be completed, he would maintain it, if requisite, by the forces of Great Britain.

Furnished with this all-important document, Wraxall set out for Zell and Hamburgh, and braved (as a less enterprising man might have felt impelled to do) the perils from impassable roads and swollen streams, to which we have already alluded, and of which no one who has not seen a northern country under water in the winter time, can form an adequate idea. He seems to have found the reward of his chivalry, in the graciousness of the reception of its object in a two hours' interview on the following afternoon, of which he has left a detail too animated, and relevant to the subject of these pages, to be omitted.

"It took place," says he, "in a spacious apartment, the windows of which commanded a view over the gardens of the castle; and I had scarcely leisure to cast my eyes around, when the Queen entered, without any attendant. My interview with her lasted till near a quarter past six, during all which time we stood in the embrasure of a window. As I had then an opportunity of closely examining her countenance and person, it being *broad daylight*, I shall add a few words more on the subject, though I have elsewhere described her. Her charms consisted principally in her youth, the delicacy of her complexion, and her *embonpoint*. Like the King, her brother, she betrayed a hurry in her articulation when eager and agitated; but which peculiarity rather added too than diminished her attractions. Her manners were very ingratiating, noble, yet calculated to win those who approached her. Indeed, towards me, who was engaged at the hazard of my life, in endeavours to replace her on the throne, it was natural she should express much good-will and condescension. I say to place her on the *throne*, because it was not merely the crown matrimonial to which she would have been restored; Christian VII. being in a state of hopeless imbecility, it followed that if she returned to Denmark, she must have been invested with supreme authority, as Regent, during her son's minority.

"After expressing regrets that her brother had not admitted me to a personal interview, and hopes that the stipulations I had brought from England would satisfy the party engaged in her interests, with *great animation* she assured me, that no sentiment of revenge or animosity towards the Queen Dowager, or Prince Frederick, or any of the individuals who had arrested or imprisoned her, would ever actuate her

conduct.* The mention of their names naturally led her to speak of the memorable night of the 16th January, 1772, when she fell a victim to her imprudence and want of precaution. I would have avoided such a topic for obvious reasons, but she entered on it with so much determination, that I could only listen while she recounted to me all the extraordinary occurrences which befel her; not omitting names and particulars respecting herself and others of the most private nature. I am, however, far from meaning that she made any disclosure unbecoming a woman of honour and delicacy." †

The not unnatural dissatisfaction of the Altona refugees, with that one stipulation from England, which made the King's declaration by his Minister subsequent to, instead of simultaneous with, the counter-revolution, necessitated a mission to Copenhagen, which the officious Wraxall was, from prudential motives, with difficulty withheld from volunteering. The stipulation again of the powerful party there, for the Queen's personal presence (which this true sister of George the Third's never flinched from hazarding) at the *outset* of their enterprise, in hopes of inducing the King of

* These amiable sentiments seem hereditarily and unconsciously (for they were not published till long after 1784, and her children, at her decease, were too young to have imbibed them) to have influenced her son in his triumphant, yet Christian, assumption of power in that year.

† The narrator might have spared the last proviso, one rather in his own peculiar style. But, independently of this negative testimony (which, as posthumous is undoubtedly valuable) the instinct of womanhood impresses on every woman,—like Matilda, of "honour and delicacy,"—that nothing short of the triple shield of innocence could enable one of her sex to press, in broad day-light, with a somewhat youthful countryman, subjects, involving (on any other supposition) her dereliction of woman's holiest duties. Nor, had the consciousness of guilt been to accompany her back to Denmark, would she have been so ready to place her head once more within the jaws of a fate, which, conscience must then have whispered, would not be revenge, but retribution.

England similarly to countenance its execution at the *moment*,—necessitated fresh journies to Zell and London, in which Wraxall was once more a willing and unobjectionable emissary. His last interview with the Queen, an evening one, prefaced with excessive precautions, and preceded by long and apprehensive waiting, in a miserably rainy and tempestuous night, is thus described.

"The room (the Queen's library) was fully lighted up, and in about half an hour she entered the apartment. She was elegantly dressed in crimson satin, and impressed me as having an air of majesty, mingled with condescension, altogether unlike an ordinary woman of condition. Our interview lasted two hours. She assured me she would write the letter demanded by the Danish nobility, to her brother, before she retired to rest; and 'as to the question put to me (added she), whether I should be ready to set out for Copenhagen,—assure them that I am disposed to share every hazard with my friends, and to quit this place upon the shortest notice. To obtain my brother's permission for that step (which I cannot take without his consent and approbation), shall form one of the principal objects of my letter to him.'"

These material points being settled, our conversation took a wider range, and as her Majesty showed no disposition to terminate it, we remained together till near eleven. When ready to leave me she opened the door, but retained it a minute in her hand, as if willing to protract her stay. She had never, perhaps, been more engaging than that night, in that attitude, and in that dress. Her countenance, animated with the prospect of her approaching emancipation from Zell (which was in fact only a refuge and an exile) and restoration to the throne of Denmark, was lighted up with smiles, and she appeared to be in high health.

Yet if futurity could have been unveiled to us, we should have seen, behind the door which she held in her hand, the "fell anatomy" (as Constance calls him) already raising his dart to strike her. Within seven weeks from that day she yielded her last breath.

It was, not, however, amid the toils and hazards of revolution, or the recovered pains and pageantries of royalty, that the impending stroke was to descend upon the head of its unconscious victim. The absence (on Wraxall's arrival in London, on the 5th of April, 1775), of Baron Lichtenstein, in Hanover, and the necessity created, by the caution of the King, in refusing a personal interview, of transmitting all communications by that circuitous route,—protracted the business till May the 10th,* when the Baron wrote to Wraxall to await in London his next dispatch, assuring him that all was proceeding favourably for the projected enterprise.

On Friday, the 12th of May, all this fabric of hopes and expectations was dashed to the earth by the tidings of the decease of the ill-starred object! Carolina Matilda, for whose restoration, with or without the co-operation of her brother, the day and hour had actually then been fixed, had breathed her last, or at least was unconscious, ere a letter, containing, it is believed, his full assent to her every request, reached Zell, whence it was returned, with the seal unbroken, to the writer.

* The precise day of Carolina Matilda's demise. The event is thus announced by Lord Suffolk to Sir R. M. Keith, in terms identifying them both with its illustrious subject :—

"*London, May* 19, 1779.

"Dear Keith,

"News is just arrived of *our* Queen of Denmark's death. She died of a putrid fever and sore throat, on the 10th of this month.

Yours ever, most truly,

"Suffolk."

Perhaps it was well for the peaceful serenity of a death-bed, on which no thought of earth seems to have intruded, that a document, so calculated to awaken visions of temporal greatness, was not permitted to reach the closing eyes of the dying sufferer; though the equanimity she manifested when a throne had seemed for ever lost, renders it doubtful if even its restored possession could at that moment have disputed with higher aspirations, the resigned and weary spirit of the royal victim!

Wraxall proceeds to relate what personally concerned himself, and his strenuous, though frustrated exertions, in the service of the Queen and her adherents. The latter were not ungrateful, and made urgent and persevering applications in his behalf, through Baron Lichtenstein to George the Third. They remained, however, apparently disregarded, till in 1781, six years after the death of Carolina Matilda, Lord North thus addressed him one day in the house: "Mr. Wraxall, I have received his Majesty's commands to see and talk with you. He informs me that you rendered very important services to the late Queen of Denmark, of which he related to me the particulars. He is desirous of acknowledging them, and we must have some conversation on the subject. Can you come to me at Bushy Park, dine, and spend the day?" At this interview, Lord North asked Sir Nathaniel what compensation he expected for his expenses in the service of her Majesty? A thousand guineas was named, and shortly after paid, and employment promised, but prevented by the change of ministry in 1782.*

* An unexpected collateral testimony to the one before mentioned—corroborating the truth of the transaction itself from the cognizance of it of Sir R. Murray Keith,—was given to the Editor (as regards the circumstance of this visit) by the lively surviving inheritrix of the Premier's

We must now accompany the unhappy Princess, so long the sport of fortune's most cruel and harassing vicissitudes, to that closing scene, which their quick succession undoubtedly accelerated. When we consider that at an age when female youth is generally still sheltered beneath a parent's fostering wing, Carolina Matilda had to encounter a cruel and final separation from all she had ever known or loved; unkindness and contumely in a foreign land; calumny and misrepresentation, followed by adulation, rendered more perilous and intoxicating by previous neglect; that, hurried from a scene of unconscious revelry, she was awoke in the night by a rude soldiery, and conveyed to a fortress, where, for four long months, her own fate was more than doubtful, while that of others must have called forth agonising sympathy; that during this interval of forced separation from one child, the life of the other, her nursling, was in danger, and its recovery the signal for its being for ever torn from her arms; that in quitting Denmark, she not only bade farewell to power and royalty, but a final farewell to objects dearer far; and that, no sooner had torturing anxiety for them allowed her a brief interval of peace, than these were invaded by agitating proposals (accepted, no doubt, chiefly for her children's sake), to embark once more on the stormy ocean where her bark had already suffered shipwreck,—who can wonder that a mental and bodily constitution, which, at four-and-twenty had exhausted all the vicissitudes of a long life, should fall an easy prey to the inroads of malignant disease? Twice, indeed, within a few months, had she experienced

unrivalled social qualities — Lady Charlotte Lindsay; on whom (then a mere child) the after-dinner stories of her father's entertaining guest made an indelible impression.

severe illness, which her youth alone had probably enabled her to withstand.

"Though her excellent sense, and the indignities she had suffered on the throne" (writes her biographer) "had reconciled her to a private station, yet her bodily frame had been visibly impaired by the repeated shocks of the outrages she had borne, with that noble fortitude, the result of innocence. The uncertainty of her dear children's fate, and the very thought of their being for ever precluded from her sight, daily preyed on her soul. No other retrospect gave her the least uneasiness. 'Were it not,' said her Majesty often to the ladies of her household, 'for this cruel separation, I should be content and happy; but this is more than I can bear.'"

Two or three months before her death she showed with transports of joy to Madame D'O——, her first lady of the bedchamber, a little portrait of the Prince Royal, her son, which she had just received. It happened that this lady, some few days after, entered the Queen's apartment at an unusual hour, and was surprised to hear her Majesty talking, though quite alone. While she stood, in the attitude of astonishment, unable to retire, the Queen turned suddenly round, and addressing her with that smile which she alone could preserve at such a moment, while her heart was torn with the most acute sensations—"What must you think," said she, "of a circumstance so extraordinary as that of overhearing me talk, though you find me perfectly alone? But it was to this dear and cherished image I addressed my conversation. And what do you imagine I said to it? Nearly the same verses which you applied, not long ago, to a child, sensible of the happiness of having found a father; verses," continued she, "which I changed, after the manner following:—

"'Et qui donc, comme moi, gouterait la douceur,
De t'appeler mon fils, d'être chère à ton cœur ?
Toi, qu'on arrache aux bras d'une mère sensible,
Qui ne pleure que toi, dans ce destin terrible ?'"

Madame D'O—— could not speak; she burst into tears, and, overcome by her emotions, hastened from the royal presence.*

Though the circumstances connected with the Queen, in which we have seen Wraxall so deeply engaged, were not for many years subsequently made public to the world, they must have been full in the narrator's mind when he paid, at the distance of three years, a *fourth* visit to the now desolate scene of such high hopes and brilliant anticipations; the frustration of which must have deepened the contrast he so pathetically describes, and will lend a deeper interest to the details of her premature decease.

"This place," writes he in 1777, "is no longer to be recognised for the same city it was three years ago. Now all is silent and desert. Not a carriage is to be

* May it not be hoped (judging from the date of this touching anecdote) that it was in the view of a possible reunion with her son, that this tenderest of mothers so feelingly apostrophised his likeness? That the Queen obtained the portraits of her children, is matter of history. The Danish MS. so often before quoted, gives a somewhat romantic, yet natural, account of the mode in which they reached the bereaved mother, by the hands of an actress, who had accompanied the now *repentant* Rantzau in his exile. To this person, whose sentiments and manners were superior to her unhappy condition, her former royal patroness is said to have exclaimed, while thanking her for the precious images of her lost children, "I am now a veteran in sorrow, though so young in years. Fate has crowded into the last ten months of my life more misery than, if spun out, might have embittered a *century*." While the affecting remark of one, who had only gazed at her afar off in the days of splendour, was, "How greatly is the Queen changed! Her sufferings have, indeed, not been lost upon her! The *sedate and melancholy cast* of countenance she has acquired, only renders her beauty more striking! Her appearance is much *improved* by it."

seen or heard in the street; grass already grows in the area of the castle, and hardly a human creature is to be found within its walls. I wandered yesterday for a considerable time through the galleries and apartments, without being able to meet any person, till, casting my eyes into one of the rooms, I discovered at its farthest extremity a man, whom I soon recognised to be Mantel, the late Queen's valet-de-chambre.* He conducted me all over the Castle, which is a noble edifice, fit for the residence of a sovereign prince. It is a square Gothic fortress, having ramparts and bastions for its defence, and surrounded by a moat. The apartments inhabited by the late Queen of Denmark (in which all had been left exactly as at the time of her death) may be termed magnificent; but in a few years they will probably sink into neglect and dilapidation."

For the somewhat diffuse, though authentic and simply-touching details given by Mantel to Sir Nathaniel of his mistress's last fatal illness, we must substitute the more concise, though equally affecting one contained in the following letter, from a lady of her household, written to an influential person at the Court of Copenhagen.

Zell, May 15th, 1775.

"The epidemic with which we were threatened, no longer exists here; having carried off in the chateau only a page, besides our beloved Queen, so deservedly the object of not only our own but the most general regrets. Her Court, where she was idolised, is overwhelmed with grief, notwithstanding their firm persuasion that our worthy Sovereign † will take care of them. But it is for *herself* she is so deplored; and you

* The same who, under very different circumstances, had been his conductor, under cloud of night, to that palace, of which they two *now* had the unlimited and unquestioned range!

† George III. of England.

cannot imagine the distress and consternation which spread through the whole town when she was understood to be in danger. She was indeed so, from the first moment of her seizure, in the opinion of our clever physician, Leyser; and was herself at once aware of it, saying to him, in express terms, 'You have brought me, since October, through two pretty serious illnesses, but this one will baffle you;' and she spoke but too truly!* The fever showed its violence from the beginning, by a pulse of 130, and for the two last days it was past counting. Leyser sent for Zimmermann, from Hanover, who came to his aid, but without effect.

"The eruption did come out, but it was with spots, which indicated its violent nature; and to this cruel disease, and the decrees of an immortal Providence, we owe our unspeakable loss. After having suffered like a Christian, with the most perfect, nay almost unexampled patience and resignation, testifying, as usual, the most gracious and tender attentions towards the ladies who nursed her through her illness, and retaining her senses and speech to the last moment, she terminated her career in a manner which edified and penetrated with admiration all who witnessed it. She saw both our worthy superintendent Jacobi, and the pastor Lehzen, who never left her; and to whom she pointed out several times what he should read to her; and among other things, that beautiful hymn of Gellert, on *The Love of Enemies*, 'Never will I seek to do them

* "The Queen," said Mantel, "who was of a plethoric habit, had always been constitutionally subject to inflammation of the throat. The weather was excessively warm, and on the 4th of May, having risen early, as was her custom, and walked out for a couple of hours, exposed to the sun, she returned exceedingly fatigued, continued unwell all day, and, on going to bed at night, said to the faithful narrator, 'Mantel, I am very ill, and fully believe that I shall die!'"

harm,' &c., frequently repeating the last verse. In a word, during these closing hours, when the mask falls from every human being, the truly heroic firmness with which she seemed to sustain the painful reverses of such signal misfortunes—the magnanimity (of all human virtues perhaps the most difficult to practise) which she displayed towards the adversaries who never ceased persecuting her—joined to the irreproachable conduct which has marked the whole time we have had the happiness to possess her, have thoroughly persuaded us of the malignity of the enemies of this august Princess. She however, has forgiven them, and we must try to do the same, hoping they may confess and repent the wrong. At the funeral service in the great church, the whole city was dissolved in tears; and in the streets, while she yet lived, nothing was heard but lamentations and invocations for the restoration to health of '*unser guten und lieben Königin.*' "*

"On the first symptoms," writes another contemporary, "of the malignant fever which snatched her from a censorious and merciless world in the prime of her youth, Carolina Matilda declared, with calmness and resignation, to her attendants, that she did not expect to survive the malady; and before it grew worse, she wrote two letters with her own hand, one to his Britannic Majesty, and the other to the King of Denmark. After they were sealed, she said, with tears in her eyes, 'I hope the King, my brother, will protect my friendless children; and that the King of Denmark will do my memory that justice he denied me while living. I freely forgive my persecutors and enemies, and will die in peace with all mankind, and my conscience.' Her Majesty continued to the last in these pious and edifying

* Our good and beloved Queen.

sentiments; comforting herself all those who beheld, with mingled grief and admiration, their royal mistress in the agonies of death. She preserved her senses to within a few minutes of that awful moment, except in the delirious intervals of her illness. She expired on the fifth day of her violent disorder, which baffled all the skill of her physicians, on the 10th of May, 1775, about midnight, before she had accomplished her 24th year, universally lamented by all ranks of people in her native country, who had sympathized with her disasters, vindicated her innocence, and foiled her accusers. *

"The inhabitants of Zell, who experienced her beneficence, grieved deeply for her loss. The King of Denmark, though conscious of the flagrant injustice he had done to his consort, was not allowed to mourn publicly for this royal victim of malice, vengeance, and calumny; † but the Danes will revere the ashes of their ill-fated Queen. The imprudences of her youth are already forgotten, but her virtues and sufferings will be transmitted to the latest posterity."

That this was no fond anticipation of warm (though anonymous) partisanship, belied by the subsequent result—the following elegant expression of the general sentiment in Denmark, from the pen of one of the living ornaments of its now widely differing Court, affords a pleasing proof.

* The participation of the English public, the middle and lower orders especially, in the sorrows and wrongs of their native princess, can hardly be overrated. It displayed itself at the time of her rescue in eulogiums (in almost all the then existing periodical publications) on Sir R. Murray Keith, under the title of the "Heroic Minister."

† So outrageously was decorum violated on this occasion, that when the intelligence of the decease of the mother of the royal children arrived, the royal family appeared the same day at the theatre, and there was afterwards a ball in domino. The king (evidently constrained) was among the dancers; but so much affected as to alarm the foreign ministers who had occasion to approach him.

"Although seventy years have elapsed since the revolution in Denmark, of January 1772, it still lives in the memory of every Dane; as it laid such a violent hand on the rudder of the State, and has not perhaps been without its influence on our political history; and even after the lapse of seventy years more, the unfortunate, but amiable Carolina Matilda, and her mournful destiny, will still be remembered."

The interest created, it is hoped, in the reader's mind in behalf of this worse than orphan offspring of an unhappy mother, as well as the love of poetical justice inherent in all mankind, will render acceptable the following brief account of the counter-revolution of 1784.

In January 1784, the Crown Prince completed his sixteenth year. In stature he was very like his father. His complexion very fair, his eyebrows bushy for a youth of his age; his hair almost white. Though a plain likeness, he bore a strong resemblance to his unfortunate mother.

The Queen Dowager, if (as is inferred) she did not cherish hopes of excluding the heir-apparent from the throne, had succeeded in keeping him hitherto as much as possible in the back-ground; and filling the residence with unfavourable reports; even insinuating that he was affected with the same mental imbecility which had so long incapacitated his father from governing. Restrained, it is said, by the advice of the wary Goldberg* from attempting to set aside his succession, she

* Goldberg, the preceptor to Prince Frederick, was the then efficient minister for foreign affairs. After the fall of Struensee, an *interior cabinet* was erected, nearly of the same kind as that for which he was doomed to die. Having possession of the king's person (who continued in a deplorable state of mental imbecility) the Queen Dowager exercised the most despotic power, till the son of Matilda wrested the reins of government from her hands, and drove her into a retirement from which she emerged no more.

yet used every method to protract the period of taking his seat in the Council, as he must necessarily do on his confirmation; a ceremony which, at the age of fourteen, had been gone through by his father, Christian the Seventh, and which, at a later period by two years, it was no longer in her power to delay.

On the 28th of March 1784, being then sixteen years and two months old, the Crown Prince was confirmed, in the royal chapel of Christianborg, in the presence of the whole court, the foreign ministers, the great officers of State, and other persons of distinction. Monsieur Bashkow, first chaplain to the King, interrogated him as to his religious creed. The examination was a long one, and the young Prince made his responses in a firm, manly, deliberate, and very audible tone of voice. His demeanour was mild, dignified, and collected; giving the most complete refutation to the calumnies that had been so industriously spread. The Queen Dowager was astonished and dismayed. The impression made on the audience was such, that many were actually affected to the shedding of tears. When Count Bernstorff * was assured of the firmness and capacity which the Crown Prince displayed on this trying ordeal, he anticipated complete success when the great attempt should be made.

* Count Andreas Bernstorff (nephew to the able minister formerly mentioned) the secret adviser of the young prince; who, in his correspondence with him, is said to have displayed premature discretion, and a firm sensible mind. Their intercourse had not escaped the lynx-eyed Juliana, and was communicated by her to Goldberg, who told her he believed that a crisis was at hand which would be fatal to her power; and admonished her not to risk the consequences which might ensue to herself and her son by pushing matters to extremities. The warning (as in the case of those whom she had herself overturned) was unheeded; but the less vindictive spirit of those who triumphed averted the consequences.

At length the hour arrived which was destined finally to destroy the power of Juliana and her party, and effect a change almost as great in the Danish government as that which followed the arrest of Carolina Matilda. Having received the sacrament, the Crown Prince was admitted as a member of the Privy Council, and succeeded his uncle, Prince Frederick, as president. On the morning of the 14th of April, he took the oath prescribed. At the moment of relieving guard, when a double proportion of the garrison was under arms, he gave personal orders that no one should quit his post without permission from himself. The Council was assembled in the King's apartment, his uncle was present. The Crown Prince addressed himself to his father, stating that the law now called on him to govern; to do which efficiently, he required a council in which both he and the nation had confidence. He then produced a memoir which he had composed, and which having read, with a firm deliberate tone of voice, he laid before the King, and requested his signature. The poor imbecile monarch, who had during so many years been kept in total subjection, appeared to hesitate.

One of the members, Rosencrone, arose and said, "Your Royal Highness is sensible that the King cannot sign such a paper, without due consideration." He had the boldness even to attempt to snatch the paper from the Prince's hands. Turning round to the Count with an air full of dignity and courage, he said, "It is not for you, sir, to advise the King on such an occasion; but I, who am heir to the throne, and responsible as such to the nation." Goldberg was silent, appearing thereby to acquiesce. Prince Frederick looked astonished and dismayed. The Crown Prince then laid the papers before the King, by whom they were immediately signed. Being thus authorised to act, the

Prince addressed himself to the Council, and in a mild, yet decisive tone, announced their dismissal.

Fearless and alone, attended only by a single domestic, the young prince perambulated the town, without the interference of the military; the crowd keeping at a respectful distance. The windows and balconies were filled with handsome and well-dressed females, who waved their handkerchiefs, bowing as he passed. These courtesies he gracefully returned, and thus escorted by a people in whose affections he already reigned (and whose respect and confidence, amid subsequent national misfortunes, he never lost) the Crown Prince, on this most brilliant day of his life, returned to the portals of Christianborg.

Amid the extensive changes that ensued, in every department of the state, the removals were attended, even in the case of the most obnoxious individuals,* with exemplary moderation, nay, considerate kindness.

Infinitely to the credit of the Crown Prince, he set an example to all the servants of the crown, in the respectful delicacy with which he treated his dejected, disconsolate, step-grandmother. He strove, by the kindest deportment, to soften the stroke which had wrested a sceptre from her hands; and his mildness and humanity affected her proud spirit more than any other mode of conduct could have done. She saw that he pitied and forgave her, and it almost broke her heart. She soon withdrew from the metropolis, fixing her residence at Fredensborg. Sullenly resigned, she strove to

* Even General Eichstadt (a chief agent in the misfortunes of his unhappy and beloved mother, and who, by a refinement of cruelty, had been appointed his own *governor*), was allowed to retire to his estates with honour and emolument; and M. Goldberg, (the Struensee of the late régime, but a man of widely differing character, and of exemplary private virtues) was permitted to retain his high situations in the household of Prince Frederick, with a pension of a thousand a year!

appear not to value what she had for ever lost; and aware of the unpopularity which, sooner or later, accompanies the votaries of ambition and the abettors of crime, she remained henceforth entirely secluded from public affairs.*

To conclude, the mildness and fortitude that distinguished the Crown Prince, on this trying occasion, entitled him to admiration and esteem. There was a pensiveness imprinted on his features, that showed he had not been nursed in the lap of fortune. He sought to obtain his legal inheritance, but he avoided anything that looked like exultation or triumph. Firm and temperate at the moment of peril, his demeanour was marked by modesty and discretion. When his enemies were overthrown, humanity forbade him to expose to misery and degradation those whom he had dismissed from their offices; though the greatest fault of many of them was the part they had acted in the sad and terrible events of 1772. Obnoxious as they must have been on that account to a son, by whom the memory of his

* She emerged from her retreat (it would seem) on an occasion, which might have been thought to have recalled to her mind any but pleasing recollections, though it will afford to that of the reader an interesting reminiscence of the infant daughter of the unhappy Carolina Matilda. In 1785, Count Razomonffsky, Russian minister at Copenhagen, writes to Sir R. M. Keith :—

"La Reine demeure à Fredenbourg, et ne vient ici que rarement. On dit que ce séjour *l'ennuie;* et qu'elle fait tout ce qu'elle peut pour trouver les occasions d'en sortir. Elle se rendra ici le jour de *la confirmation* de la Princesse Royale ; qui est aussi intéréssante par sa figure, que par son affabilité, et ses manières honnêtes et prévenantes. Cette cérémonie se fera en public, et nous y assisterons. Quant à son mariage, le tems n'en est point fixé. Le Prince son frère qui *l'aime tendrement*, voit dans ce parti l'avantage de ne s'en point separer ; et il a été engagé à y souscrire, par les raisons d'état, qu'au defaut, d'hérédité de sa part, et de celle de son oncle, c'est à sa sœur que la couronne doit échoir." The union proved a most happy one; and its offspring, a daughter, by marrying the late King, united the rival races of Juliana Maria and Carolina Matilda.

mother was through life idolized, he displayed towards them, at this early age, a spirit of clemency and moderation,* that gave the fairest prospect of the virtues which justly endeared him to all his subjects, as Frederick VI.

That Sir R. M. Keith retained a lively interest in the offspring of her whom his friend Marshal Conway always styles "*his* Queen," cannot be doubted. We have seen one Ambassador's reports to him of the sister. The following account of the brother, from Mr. Elliot, the British minister, is dated a year later:

"*Copenhagen, August*, 1786.

"The Prince Royal is much improved since I last saw him, and gains daily on the affections and good opinion of his subjects. The Danish army, which was much neglected, is *now fully adequate to check the ambition of a neighbouring country*. The Prince has the sole merit of having effected this, by unremitting assiduity, and a marked natural genius for military pursuits."

At a period when the ancient good feelings between Denmark and Great Britain appear reviving in their pristine force, it is impossible to conclude the above sketch without echoing the remarks of Wraxall (in his Posthumous Memoirs, written after the changes here recorded), on their far earlier possible renewal, and the widely different and more auspicious probable course of events, as regarded both kingdoms, had the counter-revolution he was employed in forwarding in behalf of Carolina Matilda, actually taken place.

That it would, had she lived, have been effected, "without difficulty, and almost without resistance," he says, "from the easy and bloodless manner in which it

* Precisely akin, be it remembered, to that which his lamented parent herself had expressed, on her expected restoration to power in 1775.

was carried into execution by the same individuals, or their survivors, in the spring of 1784," as narrated above, "cannot admit of a doubt."

He then adds, with a posthumous, and therefore valuable testimony, to the "energy of character and firmness" of the youthful destined Queen-regent,— "that the restoration of Carolina Matilda must have produced most beneficial political consequences to Denmark, by reviving the ancient hereditary natural connexion between that country and England, is incontestable."

"Even the modern history of Denmark, including the events that took place during the late revolutionary war, and consequently the destiny of Europe, has been affected by the consequences that flowed from the imprisonment and exile of Carolina Matilda, followed by her premature death. For her brother, George the Third, imbibed so rooted a dislike to the Danish royal family and alliance, that he never would listen to any proposal for renewing the connexion by marriage with the house of Oldenburg. I know that the present king,* Frederick the Sixth, when prince-regent, made, between 1787 and 1789, repeated efforts to obtain the hand of an English princess, leaving the selection in a great degree to his Britannic Majesty; but the king instantly rejected the overture. The heir of the Danish monarchy thus refused, espoused, in July 1790, the eldest daughter of Prince George of Hesse Cassel, by whom he had no male issue. Contrary to the true policy of Denmark, we find him thenceforth joining with France at every period of his administration.

"Napoleon had not, among his vassal kings, a more determined ally, and that formidable chief, when in

* The late monarch, son to Carolina Matilda.

1806, and the following years, he planned the invasion of this country, he relied, with good reason, on the navy of Frederick the Sixth, to 'transport,' as he threatened, 'the vengeance of the continent to our shores.' Hence, we may assume, took place the sanguinary naval engagement of Copenhagen in 1801. '*Hoc fonte derivata clades.*' Hence, too, originated the siege and surrender of Copenhagen in 1807. Hence, also, the loss of Norway in 1814; a kingdom which, during successive centuries, had been united to Denmark, but which is now transferred to the dominion of her ancient enemy, governed by one of Bonaparte's lieutenants, who occupies the throne of Gustavus Adolphus. Such are the extraordinary facts which we have witnessed in our time; facts indirectly to be traced to Carolina Matilda's death. Had she been restored to Denmark, and filled the situation of regent during her son's minority, we can scarcely suppose that her brother would have refused to cement the alliance between the two crowns, by giving one of his daughters in marriage to his nephew. Norway might, at this hour, have remained subject to him, and the Danish capital would never have been attacked or entered by an English army."

Such were, on the retrospect of nearly half a century, the conclusions of a political observer of acknowledged sagacity. May the generous interposition of our own day, banish from the minds of both nations the recollections of a less auspicious period!

[Having now concluded the Memoir of Queen Carolina Matilda, in whose sad history Sir R. M. Keith took so deep an interest, the interval between his earliest and latest political transactions (the intermediate ones being already authentically detailed in "Coxe's History of Austria"), will, it is hoped, not unacceptably be filled by his familiar correspondence with distinguished individuals of his time.]

Among the many changes, palpable, striking, nay, gigantic as they are, which within the last century have totally altered the face of society in Britain, substituting general intercourse for local association, general wealth for individual accumulation, and views of general utility for private opinion, and the ties of political party—there has not been wanting an undercurrent of change, running silently and with more questionable effect within its bosom; bearing with it, into the wide ocean of universal philanthropy, or sometimes, it may be feared, into the more absorbing tide of selfishness, much of that tenacity of personal friendship by which, at an earlier and simpler period, even public men were wont to indemnify themselves for the restraints and conventionalities of office.

Of this love ("passing," like Jonathan's, "the love of woman") it was the good fortune, perhaps not wholly undeserved, of Sir Robert Keith to enjoy an unwonted portion. And as the feudal usages, predatory habits, and local traditions of "sixty years ago," are now probably (thanks to the author of Waverley) more familiar to the present generation of readers, than genuine

out-pourings of affection and school-boy merriment from the Treasury bench and Foreign Office, a collection of letters, as "curiosities of literature," not likely to occur again in our matter-of-fact age, are here preserved; that those who have learned from history, how English public men acted and spoke, and fought, under North and Pitt, and Wolfe and Rodney, may, by a little peep under the domestic curtain (rendered harmless, alas! by the demise of all by whom it might have been deprecated), be made aware how their hearts could at the same time beat high for their country's honour, and dignity, and yet find in them a quiet corner for a tenderness of more than feminine friendship, which it was evidently the solace of their lives to pour forth, and which it never occurred to their manly hearts to be ashamed to express.

Far be it from us to assert that there are now no male friendships. But the annihilation of distances consequent on facilities of intercourse, leaves little scope for its expression on paper. Never again will a Horace Walpole carry on (as he somewhere boasts) a forty-three years' correspondence with a friend, whom, in all that time, it was never his lot to behold; or a British minister at Vienna, during an expatriation of twenty years, have his warm domestic feelings cherished, and his proud patriotism fed by the loving epistles of the very men who, while mingling in the stormy politics of the time, or even sitting at their uneasy helm, could give politics to the winds, to exchange "nonsense" with one who, while deeply immersed in what he somewhere calls the "slough of despond," yclept diplomacy, still contrived (thanks to his natural buoyancy of disposition) to keep up, in a brighter and purer atmosphere, his clear Briton's head and warm Briton's heart.

The peculiarity—a peculiar charm some may think it—of the ensuing letters is, that while deficient comparatively in Walpole's passing incident and local gossip, they are rich in their exuberance of good feeling and good will to mankind. The heart has still more to do with them than the head, powerful as were the intellects which could thus sportively unbend. No one, perhaps, could rise from their perusal, without at least a keener appreciation of the pleasure of friendship, and a deeper conviction that there is a sunshine of the soul, which office could not obscure, nor ceremony chill, nor the very clouds of age itself suffice to dim; and why? because its perennial fount *within* was independent of external circumstances, and destined to survive even the body's decay.

Among the official friendships of Sir R. M. Keith (and they were many), one of the tenderest was that with the Earl of Suffolk, then Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. A private letter, formerly given, addressed by him to Sir Robert at Zell, would suffice to show that the admiration excited in his principal, by his conduct in the difficult Danish business, had been ripened by personal intercourse into warm and affectionate regard. That it was not impaired by absence, a correspondence continued, in spite of the disabling effects of the painful disorder to which Lord Suffolk fell an early martyr, till his death in 1778, exists to prove. In corroboration of the above remarks on its peculiar cordiality, a specimen or two may appropriately usher in the series. The Foreign Secretary thus unofficially accompanies the first dispatch for Vienna.

[*Private.*]

THE EARL OF SUFFOLK TO SIR R. M. KEITH.

Duke-street, Westminster, Dec. 1772.

DEAR KEITH,

An opportunity of addressing a few lines to you in my own hand, cannot happen without my making use of it while I have a hand to employ, which has not been the case long, from repeated attacks of the gout. I have enjoyed but a short interval of health since you left us, but I begin to know the value of that blessing, and shall, for the future, endeavour to deserve it. I never meet any of your friends who do not make the kindest inquiries after you, though I have seen none of the *gang* lately, Bagot excepted. Harley's time is taken up with the Select Committee, whose business it is to inquire into those affairs which every body *knows* the state of—I mean the condition of the East India Company. Our friend is chairman of this Committee, and I dare say will make a very accurate report of all he has discovered. And this will not only justify the interference of the legislature, but render a failure of interference highly culpable. So little of other business is passing in St. Stephens', that I can collect nothing from thence to make you stare or smile. Few sessions have sat three weeks without making one do one or other. Our senators are intent upon doing everything they can for the reduction of the price of the necessaries of life; I fear, after all, they will have the mortification to find their labours fruitless. We must not expect that our shoulders are strong enough to support such a load of debt without smarting under it. This must have its operation universally; and a person who buys the commodities he stands in need of, dearer in consequence of it, must of course sell those he has to dispose of dearer.

I think you must confess I have not forgotten my promise, of sending you a letter of *chit-chat*. I have only to add, that as we miss you at Copenhagen, it is but fair you should give us the satisfaction of profiting by you at Vienna. Prevent, therefore, the ruin of many industrious traders, by procuring an efficacious support to the King's representations in favour of the city of Dantzick.

Si Pergama dextrâ defendi possent. Happy is it for that place that so much of its interests is lodged in your hands! Believe me, dear Keith,

With the truest regard and esteem,
Your most faithful and obedient servant,
SUFFOLK.

The following, though written some time after, yet, as referring to a purely personal matter, may (to preserve unbroken another series of correspondence, and as a proof of warm and undiminished friendship) be here introduced :—

If I were writing, my dear Keith, to one who I did not believe truly and affectionately interested himself in my welfare, I should not begin my letter by speaking of myself; and saying that I am now, thank God! perfectly recovered. I have been able to tell you so these ten days; but I wished to be able to tell you something more, and therefore deferred writing. It is with the sincerest satisfaction I can assure you that I have the fairest prospect of succeeding in your business.*

I found a favourable opportunity of resuming it, and I have, I think, convinced Lord North, that while he is forming arrangements to gratify others, it is not

* A well-founded claim for increase in official appointments, rendered absolutely necessary by their former inadequacy to the expenses incurred.

unreasonable that he should acquiesce in the pittance I request for you, and that now is the moment to do it. Having cleared the way thus far, I pressed him strongly to give me an immediate assurance that the thing should be done; but as I could not bring him quite up to that point, my next object was, to try the dispositions of our most gracious master. I acquainted him with the state of my negociation with Lord North, adding, that I believed it stood so well, that a word from his Majesty would throw the balance the right way at once. I feel more deeply than I can express, the kindness and alacrity with which the King undertook to speak to Lord North. He repeatedly said he would do it with *pleasure;* and, with his usual precision, desired to know the amount of what was wished. I told his Majesty with equal frankness, the sum your friends desired for you. My opinion is that the prospect is fair. God bless you, my dear Keith, and give you all success!

Ever yours most affectionately,

SUFFOLK.

In a still later letter he thus writes, on a similar subject:—

The remainder of your business being in such good hands, I trust I may hope it will be speedily completed. There is hardly a *man in the world* for whom I would have endeavoured to carry this point, besides yourself; and I do not believe there are many for whom North would have done it. Nor do I in my conscience think it just to attribute our success entirely to his attention for me. I do believe his good-will towards yourself, and his consideration for your distinguished behaviour, turned the scale, and had its full and honourable weight.

I ever am, dear Keith,

Your most affectionate and faithful servant,

SUFFOLK.

SIR R. MURRAY KEITH TO MR. BRADSHAW.*

Harwich, October 18th, 1772.

HERE I am, my dear Brad, upon the utmost verge of the best of all possible kingdoms, with the expectation of quitting it in a few hours! I have a thousand tender feelings for those I leave, and as many anxious ones in regard to the business upon which I am now to enter. What zeal, assiduity, and truth can do to justify the partiality of my friends and patrons, shall not be wanting. You live among those to whom I owe everything. Bear witness to them of the extent of my gratitude, and be assured that I am, with the truest friendship,

My dear Bradshaw, yours for ever,

ROBERT MURRAY KEITH.

SIR R. M. KEITH TO MR. BRADSHAW.

Vienna, December 5th, 1772.

I TOLD you at parting, my dear Brad, nay, more, I proved to you by geometrical demonstration, that I am,

* This gentleman (often playfully styled in the correspondence "my lord," from being a Lord Commissioner of the Admiralty) formed one of the select society already mentioned under the title of the "Gang;" and enjoyed in consequence, along with the intimacy of its other distinguished members, that of Sir R. M. Keith; and seems to have been selected, for his congenial epistolary powers, as the amanuensis of that circle of friends, to cheer with home intelligence its exiled member. It was a task for which he was eminently fitted, by the confidential acquaintance with, and active participation in, their measures, ("far beyond," says Walpole, "his ostensible situation,") to which he was admitted by the Ministry; as well as by a vein of playful humour, too much akin to his correspondent's own, not to have formed a bond of mutual intimacy; resting, however, it will be seen, on higher and better grounds than mere political sagacity, or convivial pleasantry. The series of letters, (carefully preserved by surviving friends to *both*, and forming an unbroken whole), will, on that account, be more acceptable to the reader; and by their lively *badinage*, relieve the graver portions of the present work.

and ought to be, the happiest of all mortal beings. That a separation from a set of the best friends that ever a poor man was blessed with, has thrown a cloud over that happiness, is nothing more than a proof that I am not undeserving of those sentiments, upon the duration of which, I have the most implicit reliance. I am firmly persuaded that my royal master, and his ministers, under whom I serve, as well as my private friends, *and their wives,* are the honestest people alive; I expect to be every day more and more obliged to every one of them; and hang me if I don't serve them all in their turns, to the very best of my power! So much for what you already know; now to the new scene upon which I am entering. After making a kind of a zig-zag journey through Holland, Germany, &c., (in which I picked up your two scraps, for they are no more, though folded in the shape of letters) I arrived here on the 20th November.

The first ten days of my residence here were trotted away in leaving bits of card at doors, and repeating my dancing-master's bows to crowds of people who may, in a course of years, become my friends, or at least acquaintance. I don't know how my own face looked upon these occasions, but I know that I felt pleased, as every person turned of forty said something kind about my father.* A good omen, you 'll say—for a favourable impression, conveyed from fathers and mothers, may possibly be transferred to the second generation, and work in my favour. I am a stranger, a perfect stranger as yet; but I may hope to be looked upon as a benevolent traveller, who brings good intentions, and hopes for good treatment. You shall know more of me

* No more detailed account of Sir R. M. Keith's *present* debût in Vienna having been (unfortunately) preserved, the reader is requested to refer for his probable reception as a *resident,* to the letter from Dresden, describing its flattering tenor when a mere passing visitor.

when I have had time to look about me, and peep a little into the minds which animate the handsome faces I have seen. No offence to the dear creatures I have left behind, if I say that there are here some as pretty patterns of Dame Nature's workmanship as one can set eyes upon; and then they play at loo as keenly as any Bess in Europe! But what is that to me, who never touch a card, you know?

Well; but I must have done scribbling to you, for I am to write this very day to every point of the compass, to tell my colleagues that his Majesty's plenipo is legitimately installed in the enjoyment of so many thousands per annum.* Heaven grant me an opportunity of returning the beneficent bestowers of the thousands some good merchandise for their money!

I entreat of you, dear Brad, to remember our bargain, and to administer to me, now and then, an enlivening dose of that wholesome nonsense I delight in. You, and the *Gang*, deserve Tyburn together, if you suffer me to dwindle into a wise and humdrum politician! Adieu, my friend, carouse with the present, cherish the absent, make the fortune of Sir Basil, and believe me,

Most truly yours,

R. M. K.

* The replies to these circulars, still extant, are very characteristic. While one stiff *confrère*—(indeed, many do,) congratulates, not the Envoy, but Great Britain and the Royal Family, on the promotion of one to whom they are indebted for such well-known public services! another (in witty though irreverent phrase) thus expresses himself. "I most heartily wish you joy upon your nomination to Vienna. I hope you will not have so *hot work* there as in your *last place*; but should there be any, and it ends as much to your honour and reputation as that did, I do not care if all the devils in H— were to appear to you!"

SIR R. M. KEITH TO HIS SISTER.

Vienna, December 11th, 1772.

DEAR ANNE,

Your patience has been meritorious, and shall be rewarded. You see my intentions by the size of my sheet, and I promise you it shall be crammed with all manner of novelties, great and small. First, then, I rejoice with you on the prospect of our being in possession of a capacious and most elegant building, to hold and preserve our deeds and titles.* The clan Keith will not require a large allotment of the inside of the office; but they have, in my opinion, as clear an interest in the outside, as any family in the kingdom.

Secondly, I think my father's advice to Abergeldie's son the wisest that can be given.† I am told that his purchase here, if permitted, must begin at the very lowest rank of an officer; and an order is soon expected, to forbid any future sale of commissions. This matter seems pretty clear; but I have one hint to give you *en passant*, which is, that whenever you mention a Scotch laird, you will, for the moment, sink the magnificence of title, and condescend to let me know his family name. Abergeldie, however pompous, may be, for aught I know, the name of a Roman cardinal; and I should have some scruple in serving as counsellor to one of their Catholic eminences. *Apropos* to cardinals, I dined yesterday at the house of one, who expresses the most sincere regard for my father, and desires it may be known to him; Prince and Princess Clary, ditto; as also Esterhazy, Colloredo, Lichtenstein, Lubomirski,

* The splendid new Register Office erecting at Edinburgh, under the direction of Sir R. M. Keith's particular friend, Lord Frederick Campbell, then Lord Registrar for Scotland.

† Mr. Gordon, of Abergeldie, so named, *more Scottice*, from his family estate.

Kinsky, Auersberg, Dietrichstein, Khevenhuller, Schwartzenberg, Sternberg, Kollowrath, Taronca, Trauben, and Trautmansdorf, Hildburghhausen, and Burghausen, Tekeli, and Freychapell; in short, the whole city and suburbs of Vienna! You see that your friend Abergeldie walks at the head of a handsome procession, and need not be ashamed of his company.

And now pray, my dear Anne, let me appoint you my substitute with G——,* to din into his ears, "*Trees, trees, trees!*" every time you meet him. I have not a twig of his planting at the hall, and I own I expected a forest. This is no joking matter;† I would rather be master of a handsome plantation, and *hedge-rows*, than of a mine of gold; so you know your cue, and will pursue it. You shall be the ranger of the new forest in Tweeddale, and your husband, when you get one, shall be lord-warden of the marches!

There is a fatality attends the English post since my arrival here, which leaves me often in the dark as to what regards my private, and, I may say, invaluable

* Sir R. M. Keith's bailiff, on his property in Tweeddale.

† This alludes to an amusing anecdote (just communicated to the editor), occurring in a letter from Sir R. M. Keith to his sister, when travelling in France in 1764. "Yesterday afternoon, in passing through the noble forest of Compiègne, I took the liberty of questioning, as follows, my man Andrew, who is a gentleman of great sagacity. 'Pray, Andrew, saw you ever so fine a forest as the one we have come through?' 'Sir,' quoth Andrew, 'the forest is a gay forest; but I 'se warrant I 've seen other forests before now.' 'Where, Andrew? Have you anything like this in Athol?' 'Aye, sir. I wish your honour had only seen the Duke of Perth's grit forest in our country! It hae a hantle of fine deers in 't, and Colonel Græme pays a hunder pund starling by the year just for till keep the deers frae bein' destroyed intilt.' 'Well, Andrew, I 'm glad to hear what you say; but are the trees in that forest as fine as those we saw to-day?' '*Trees, sir!*' quoth Andrew; 'no, sir, there 's no a stannin' stick in the Duke's grit forest; but it 's a' bonny hill and heather, like the *wood o' Mar*.' O, patriotism, patriotism! thy errors are beautiful! I embraced my man Andrew, and we pursued our journey."

connections. Few men, I believe, my dear Anne, can brag of such a set of friends as those I have left behind me; and no man can be more grateful for that first of all worldly blessings. From the kindness and good disposition of many worthy people I have met here, I will flatter myself that my good fortune, in that respect, is not confined to one nation or country. My old Saxon friends * received me, in my late visits, with great cordiality; and I am now so near a neighbour, that I can attend to all that passes among them.

A letter, like an egg, is all the better for being *new laid;* and I confess it hurts me to think that this beautiful sheet of nonsense may be musty and fusty in its *eighteen days'* passage from hence to Leith. However, this must not deter us from continuing our traffic; the more so, as I can assure you that your folio of the 5th November, came as fresh as the first day. *Basta cosi—m' intende?* You speak very good Italian, and I wish you could see our comic opera, and our ballets. The whole life and conduct of Agamemnon and Clytemnestra, and Ægisthus, and Orestes, with loves, jealousies, murders, and complete revenge, are expressed to a miracle in capers and *coupées;* and I declare to you, that this heroic tragedy, without words, is as interesting as a tragedy can be, when Garrick is not an actor. Our composer Noverre, is a very Shakespeare (no offence to his memory), and, as an author, he is certainly one of the greatest that ever put *toe to stage,* for I cannot say pen to paper.

You village maidens have no idea of these brilliant and pompous shows, and, to say the truth, that noble pile of building, the Taylors' Hall, is not large enough to be a waiting-room for Clytemnestra's maids of honour!

* The Court of Dresden, from whence Sir R. Keith had, in the Dowager Electress, a weekly correspondent.

But enough of this; I must not put you out of conceit with the Leith company of comedians.

Lord Stormont left this place two days ago, loaded with all possible marks of esteem and distinction on the part of the Sovereigns, and affectionate regard on that of his numerous private friends. To a man of his sensibility, such a separation must needs be very painful.* The goodness of the Harrach family to me is even beyond my expectations; and my father will, I am sure, take pleasure in thanking them for it. Count Ernest had provided me a house in the Dorothée street (my father's first street), but it will not contain my family when they are all assembled. It is not easy to find a suitable house without a monstrous rent; but I have some months before me, and shall do my best to keep within bounds. Private affairs remind me of Sir Basil, and I hope soon to hear of the completion of his wishes, if my intelligence be well founded. I may have accounts from my brother in an hour or two, as the English post

* This is beautifully expressed in a letter, addressed to Sir R. Keith by his predecessor, previous to the former's arrival. It runs thus:—

"*Vienna, September*, 1772.

"I am much obliged to you for your kind letter, and for the many flattering marks it carries of the partiality of your friendship. The best return I can make for all your cordial wishes for my future happiness, is, to wish, as I most heartily do, that in point of private satisfaction you may gain as much by your change of situation, as I shall certainly *lose by mine*. I am fully sensible of the distinguished mark of favour his Majesty was pleased to show, in choosing me for an employment (the French Embassy) which is so much sought after; but, at the same time, I am too well acquainted with this country, and that I am going to, ever to expect anything that can compensate the loss of that society to which I must soon bid a *long farewell!* As to you, my dear Sir, you have already many cordial friends in this country, (some of them hereditary ones), and will soon make more; and, in all probability, when the day comes, you will leave Vienna with as *much regret as I do*. As to politics, after the repeated proofs of prudence and ability you have given, you must be very unjust to yourself not to feel, that you are *more* than equal to any business which can arise *here*."

is expected; so I will suspend the conclusion of my scrawl till then.

Dec. 12*th.*

Basil confirms the good news of his blooming hopes; may they soon ripen into such substantial fruit as suits his palate and circumstances! * You talk of rains and inundations, while at present my daily walks round Vienna are as pleasant as at any time of the year. Whenever any object strikes me agreeably, I reflect

* A wish realised by Sir Basil's appointment to the government of Jamaica. As a specimen (courtly even for that day) of the ministerial language of the times, may be quoted the expressions of the Colonial Secretary to Mr. Keith, his father. A short time previous to the nomination, Lord Dartmouth (then newly entered on office) thus writes.

SIR,—I am very sorry that my predecessor had given Sir Basil Keith any hopes of being appointed to the government of one of his Majesty's Colonies in America; because, if it should hereafter be my good fortune to be able to fulfil his wishes in that respect, I shall not be able to claim to myself the sole merit of a recommendation, which will be so honourable to me, and so advantageous to the public. The personal character of Sir Basil, as well as the public and eminent services of his father and brother, entitled him to my particular consideration from those who are intrusted with any share in the administration of the King's affairs; and though I should ill-deserve the frankness with which you have honoured me with your commands, were I to say he will be the very *first* I may wish to recommend, I can say with equal frankness and sincerity, that it will make me very happy to see the day when I shall find myself at liberty so to do. I hope you will believe that I feel what I express, when I assure you that I am, with the highest sense of the pleasure I received from our former acquaintance, and with great regard and esteem,

Your most obedient and humble servant,

DARTMOUTH.

The courtly secretary was perhaps not yet aware that Sir Basil possessed a friend at court more powerful than either. On the authority of the same venerable surviving friend of Sir R. M. Keith, by whom other anecdotes have been communicated, George the Third, considering apparently the ribbon and embassy so handsomely conferred, as only the well-earned meed of diplomatic merits, still wished to add some token of personal good-will, and complaining repeatedly that while others continually importuned him, "Keith would ask nothing for himself," drew forth the fraternal wish of a provision for his less fortunate brother.

with pleasure that it has probably created the same sensation in my father. My love and duty to him and all the Hermits. Adieu, dear Anne.

Your affectionate

R. M. K.

SIR R. M. KEITH TO MR. BRADSHAW.

Vienna, Dec. 26th, 1772.

Your reasoning upon the subject is perfectly just, my dear Brad; and it would be the highest absurdity to expect that a Lord of the Admiralty, who has apartments in Hampton Court Palace, and a town house opposite to Lord Bute's, should waste his time in scribbling to a pragmatical fellow, whose dulness has been rewarded by the privilege of talking politics to a foreign potentate. I give up the point, my dear Sir; I release you from every engagement of that sort, and all I request is, that you will be pleased to allot one half guinea per quarter for the postage of those letters which I must address to you, in order to keep up the appearance of my being in a certain intimacy with some of your great men at the helm of affairs. As to the letters I write (as I am persuaded you have too much sense to read them yourself), the best thing you can do is to clap a cover upon them, and send them down to some blockhead at your borough of Saltash, telling him that they come from a foreign Minister, and probably contain a great part of the secrets of Europe. This epistle will, I am afraid, hardly serve for that purpose, but I shall take care that the next shall be a perfect plum-pudding of foreign hard names, surmises, innuendoes, crosses and stars, and your whole borough may feast upon it for a month. I allow that your antagonist, Mr. Williams, may set up a counter-correspondence in the borough, and tell them strange tales about the

Caribs and the other savage inhabitants of the West Indies. But I trust to the political genius of your worthy constituents, and make no doubt that the hints I shall be able to convey from the banks of the Danube and the Pruth, and the Borysthenes, and the Black Sea, will greatly preponderate, and secure your interest in the corporation. In this manner I would fain hope that my correspondence (otherwise nugatory and jejune) may be turned to some little account, by that ability which your lordship possesses in matters of government.

With regard to my humble self, I must freely confess, that the total silence of all my friends did make me fret a little at first. But I am now perfectly reconciled to it, especially since I have fallen upon a method of obtaining authentic information (and *pretty fresh too*) of everything that passes in old England. For I have written to a gentleman in the city who will send me out by the first ship that *sails in the spring* for Trieste, a complete second-hand set of the Magazines, both *Universal and Country;* and I defy any one of you all to be married, or pilloried, or hanged, but what I shall know of it before six months go about.

Don't you blush, Mr. Bradshaw? Does not the cream colour of your countenance tinge itself with red at the repeated instances of my moderation and forbearance? Have you read thus far without feeling that with no more trouble, and at the expence of only three and sixpence, I could have *spoken daggers* to you in the first page of Mr. Woodfall's * lucubrations? Put me not, however, to further trial; the patience of man has its limits; and if this letter be not answered by return of post, I will buy out *Surena,*† seize upon *Poets' Corner,* and baste your worship with more lampoons and

* The well-known printer of the Letters of Junius, &c.

† A *nom de guerre* of one of the writers in Woodfall's paper.

epigrams than ever poor Wolfe had epitaphs. But I trust to your repentance and amendment, and shall, for this once, return to our familiar chit-chat, as if nothing had occurred to interrupt it.

I don't know how it is, my dear friend, but the same old story which you and I talked over in a post-chaise, about a thousand pounds a year, *a wife and a farm*, is continually trilling through my brain; and I can't for the soul of me help thinking, that in something of that kind consists the *summum bonum*. But mounted as I am upon the above-mentioned hobby-horse, I can, however, assure you with great truth, that whilst I am to serve my master abroad, I never can have a commission so honourable and agreeable as the one I now enjoy. I like the sovereigns I am sent to, their capital, and their subjects. There is not a happier man in all Austria than myself; yet I have a hankering after *home*, which, as it is built upon laudable motives, I cannot wish to suppress. I have often thought that not one in a hundred of you odd fellows, who wallow in the luxury of the land you live in, knows the value of the enjoyments which are within his reach. For my own part, I never think of John Bull and his *little proud island* without a singular pleasure. There is a *queerness* in John that I delight in; there is a stamp upon him—a character—a variety—a manliness, which nothing can come up to; and then John's women are so fresh and tidy, his grass so green, his mutton and claret so good, his *house so much his own*, that I cannot relinquish my share of those advantages.

I hope you do not suppose from all this, that I am fool enough to give way to a boyish impatience, which sours the present pleasures, by anticipating, and perhaps over-rating futurity. No, my Brad,—I am desirous to *earn* my bread before I sit down to eat it; and my only *secret* is to be contented now, with the certainty of

being still happier hereafter. I question whether any of your brethren of the Cabinet possess a more valuable nostrum than the one I boast of; but I have affection and gratitude enough towards several of them, to wish that they may: and so you are at liberty to say in my name, to Lord North, and Lord Suffolk, and Mr. Rigby; assuring them that no man on earth is more sincerely attached to them than, dear Brad,

Your's,

R. M. K.

MR. BRADSHAW TO SIR R. M. KEITH.

19*th January*, 1772.

I SEND you with this letter, the report of the Secret Committee upon the state of the East India Company. That business is of the utmost importance, and will be productive of much honour, or much mischief, to *our friends*. At this moment, I doubt, there is no plan. It is resolved (indeed that must be done) to support the Company, by lending them the sum they want, which you will see is about 1,400,000*l.*; and I believe it is also resolved, that the surplus of the year, instead of being applied towards the discharge of the debt, should be applied to this purpose. But to support them at the present moment, will be doing very little, unless that assistance is followed by regulations, to prevent the shameful mismanagement, both at home and abroad, which has brought the Company into their present situation. Some very strong facts have already come out, against more than one of the *nabobs*, who have returned laden with money of the Company's, and the spoils of the wretched inhabitants of Indostan. I never saw such a spirit as appeared in the House, and seems to actuate every individual, upon the affair of the *Matout*, which came out against a certain Mr. Sykes, as

you will have read in the public papers. Mr. Sykes, in a second defence, which he attempted some days after, declared he had only followed Lord Clive's example. If this comes out in proof (and there are many who say it can, and shall,) the punishment of such offenders must be undertaken by government, whatever their connections, or parliamentary interest may be; and even this act of justice will, from many circumstances not unknown to you, prove a delicate and difficult business.

You have heard of all the misery and distress which has fallen upon the commercial world. It has not in the smallest degree affected our friends, which I am sure will give you pleasure. Poor Shah Allum* has been upon the brink of bankruptcy, and is at this moment supported by a subscription of 100,000*l.* from bankers and merchants, set on foot by our friends.† To what a situation has the little mortal brought himself from being master of 300,000*l.*, and of a business from which he could draw 12,000*l.* per annum! You, my dear Chevalier, are in the high road to enormous wealth. You cannot fail, in your present walk of life, to amass *many plums*. I charge you, take warning by Shah Allum; and don't let the desire of a *fifth plum*, rob you of the *four*, which I take for granted you have nearly completed!

All that you love here, love, remember, and regret you. If our parties are dull, you are wished for to enliven them; if cheerful, you are longed for, that you may have your share of them. There is not a D—, or a B—, or any honest letter in the alphabet that is not devoted to you, and would not willingly make you a partaker of our pleasures; because, by coming to claim

* Sir George Colebrooke, an Indian Millionaire of the day.

† Messrs. Drummonds, of Charing Cross.

your share, you would more than double our stock. Finish your business, obtain your well deserved reward; and "live with us, and be our love," as the old song says. Adieu, my dear friend; I write in the utmost hurry; but with still more truth than haste, I subscribe myself,

Ever yours,

T. B.

SIR R. M. KEITH TO MR. BRADSHAW.

Vienna, February 17th, 1773.

My servants are not arrived, nor do I know anything of them. To be sure, these gentlemen are the bearers of the joint *labours* of all my London friends, and I shall have at least one letter from your honour; and I have no right to scold—for that was so snug an opportunity of writing—and saved postage, &c. Nonsense! nonsense! my dear Brad; my anxiety does not brook such calm deliberation; my stomach cannot feed upon air for four months, in order to make a more hearty meal at the end of them. In short, I am angry, and I say so frankly, because I can neither be sulky nor silent. If the *Gang* has found out any man who is more cordially attached to them than I am, let them put him in my place, in God's name—but if not, pray do you help them to recollect, that He who made me, gave me the warmest and strongest feelings, and that nothing can put these feelings to a more severe trial than the silence of that set of people whom I love in preference to all others. I bar all flimsy excuses on their part—of—"I have not a moment's time"—"I hate pen and ink"—"I love my friend, but I can't write." Take my word for it, he who is obstinate in depriving his friend of a very sensible pleasure, which would cost him but a three minutes' trouble, is either very selfish, or very lukewarm. How do you like my logic, Mr. Brad? I think it pretty conclusive; *ergo*, (for I will positively

scold out this page) my bosom friends are a parcel of careless, callous blockheads; and you, dear sir, are very deservedly the leader of them.

This is the third time I have tuned the vocal shell since my arrival here, and to "hills and dales," as the song says, "did I my passion tell," for not a human creature answered. The same may happen to me now; but, like Sawbridge on septennial parliaments, I will renew my motion, in hopes of a less profligate majority; and show to those who can read, that our ancestors, from the days of Alfred, down to those of the tyrannical reign of Henry the Eighth, laid it down as a principle, that friendship might outlive an absence of twelve calendar months.

But hang it! I can't harp any more upon that old string. Have not I got Prince Schwartzerberg, and Prince Trautsohn, and Count Trautmansdorff, and Count Zinzendorff de Pottendorff, who doat upon me? Other guess people these than your Brads, and Freds, and Bobs, and Harrys—fellows with names of no sound or dignity! Have I not the Princess of Khevenhuller Metch, and the Baroness of Kollowrath Kraskofsky, the Countess of Schrettenbach, and the Dowager of Rumpenhausen? all ladies of sixty quarters, who speak High German and Sclavonic, whose very maids of honour would turn up their sharp noses at your Bessys, and Ferrys, and Tattys? With these will I live, in their palaces and castles, and, like a great man as I am, wipe out the memory of past connections. If I could but prevail upon his Majesty to lengthen my name, by five or six syllables, I do not despair of obtaining the hand of the fair Feretina de Podstackzky Lichtenstein, niece to Count Grazalkovicz de Gyarach, Conservator of the Crown of the Kingdom of Hungary, &c., &c.

But, alas! while I carry the little stunted name of Keith, there is no aiming at that honour! Don't you

now, Mr. Brad, go to imagine that I am again in good-humour with you, because I write nonsense! No, truly—nature had indeed like to have got the better; but I won't be in good-humour, I 'll never be in good-humour, and if I am so, I will at least not own it, to such people as you. I don't desire to be remembered to anybody. I scorn bankers, brokers, agents, commissioners, lords register, and lords of Admiralty; I don't care who governs your paltry island, or who sits as chairman of committees. The day may come, when the best of you may have business to transact in the Holy Roman Empire, and then, you will seek the protection of,

SIR ROBERT MURRAY KEITH,

Knight of the most Honourable Order of the Bath, Colonel of Departed Infantry, Laird of the Manors of Murrayshall, Beghouse, &c., in the country of Tweeddale, and His Majesty's Envoy Extraordinary, and Plenipotentiary at the Court of their Imperial, Royal, and Apostolic Majesties, &c., &c., &c.

SIR R. M. KEITH TO HIS SISTER.

Vienna, March 7th, 1773.

AT length, dear Anne, I have one of your sheets, and welcome it was, as I began to think the Hermits had lost the faculty of inditing. I have received all the preceding letters (my father's included) which you mention; and when you shall have hold of this missive, it will be the eighth of all denominations I shall have transmitted to the Hermitage from Vienna. This being premised, I must remember that my folio must be an outlandish journal.

I wish Lent were in the Pope's inside! or that a good comedy were a part of the papistical penance! Cards, cards, cards! You must know I never touch them in jest or earnest; and therefore am the most useless of God's creatures. "*Monsieur—joue-t-il?*"

"Non." "Comment? Monsieur ne joue pas à aucun jeu?" "Non." "Mais cela est inoui!"—et puis on laisse là Monsieur pour jamais. I, your unworthy brother, lost thirty bowing acquaintances, male and female, in the first six weeks, by the above laconic answers to two simple questions; and yet I am incorrigible, for cards and I are incompatible. I never tire, that's one thing; I can look pleasant for a week together, and feel comfortable, and laugh cheerfully, when it comes to my turn; and all without cards. *Ergo,* why should I play?

March 12th.

I have fallen upon an excellent way to please the public in the article of card-playing, without sacrificing my own five senses, to a parcel of red and black spots. A lady, who is generally remarkably lucky at cards, but who had lately a bad run of about a week, complained t'other day loudly of her misfortunes, and said she must soon relinquish cards, her favourite amusement. I immediately thought I might strike an advantageous bargain with this dear creature, and satisfy all mankind. I therefore agreed to attack Dame Fortune with *my* money and *her* fingers; and now she plays her three parties every day in my name, and at my risk; and I am now one of the prettiest card-players in Vienna—*by proxy!* This agreement has amused the whole town; and I am in no danger of being a loser by it in the end, as she plays well and luckily, and for very small sums. *"Monsieur le Chevalier Keith est bien aimable;"* —dit on, *"il joue au loup par procureur."* * Aye!

* Sir R. Keith little thought, perhaps, that in granting this "deputation" to the keen little sportswoman, he was enlisting in his Royal Master's service an equally staunch ally. When, a few years later, (in Sir R. Keith's absence,) an emissary from the revolted American Colonies was surreptitiously introduced at Prince Kaunitz's by the French Ambassador, "*la petite veuve*," (as she was called), declared he should "never either dine or play cards there while she presided, were she to be a winner by it, of *ten thousand crowns!*"

and next Carnival I will hire me a dancer, and skip by *procuration also!* You may tell my father that the lady in question is a widow, Countess Clary; perhaps he does not remember her. She is a Saxon, and does the honours at Prince Kaunitz's. A little, fat, round, tidy body, and extremely good-humoured.

But I must have done for this evening, as my friend the Venetian Ambassador is coming to chat at my fireside. This letter of mine is pretty much in the style of that conversation; but so much the better, for I am so tired of spreading politics upon paper, that I am happy to find some vent for my own native nonsense. They say people read ministers' letters upon the road. Whoever has the good fortune to peruse this epistle, with the eye of a politician, will say (and perhaps not without reason) that his Britannic Majesty has sent the idlest fellow in all his dominions to reside in the capital of the Holy Roman Empire. I have a great mind to tell that same anxious gentleman, that the aforesaid idle fellow is happier in himself and in his friends, than any ten of the wisest and gravest diplomatical Dons in Christendom. But I must positively have done, for I hear the Venetian Senator coughing upon my staircase! Adieu.

R. M. K.

MR. BRADSHAW TO SIR R. MURRAY KEITH.

South Audley-street, 8th March, 1773.

I NEVER in my life could make an *excuse* to a man I loved, and to whom I had not behaved as I ought. You, my dear Keith, stand in both those situations, and I have not impudence enough to use any arms in my defence, but submission and penitence. I am not only unpardonable to you, but to myself; for if I had written to you I should have had more letters from you, and I

should also have deserved them better; but then I must have showed them to *Miss Fanny Murray*,* and I must have heard that there is no such man, for public or private correspondence, as Sir Robert Keith; that it was the most fortunate circumstance of Fanny's life to know and be connected with you, as the most able assistant and most pleasing friend! Not one word of this is true of this same Sir Robert Keith; and yet this, and far more, was I obliged to hear from Fanny a few days ago, who wished to know if you were happy. I had your own picture in my pocket, drawn by your own masterly hand; and I gave it to Fanny, who, to be serious, makes me jealous, for she seems to love you better than I do. I have promised to show *her* your private correspondence at the Retreat. *She* told me that every day convinced her of your superiority in your line; that she had not more confidence in herself than in you; and upon my saying something of your attachment and regard, she disclaimed having ever had it in her power to show you favour, and said you had been much more useful to *her* than she had been to you, and added, that your merit was as much felt in a *certain place*, as by her and I. Write to me now, Monsieur le Chevalier; forgive me my past negligence and omissions; for though I fear I can't hurt you with *Fanny* or her *master*, yet I will not be *bored* about you, nor will I report my borings to you unless I am paid for it.

It is now necessary, my dear Keith, that I should tell you that many vexations which are now over, and which it would answer no purpose to tell you (or you should have them to the last grievance), have really prevented me from fulfilling my promise and indulging my

* The private cypher name for Lord Suffolk, the official, principal, and private friend of Sir R. M. Keith.

inclination to converse with you in this only way that is in my power. In future, you shall have no occasion to complain of me; believe this, and forget that you have had any.

I saw *the governor of Jamaica to-day* in perfect health. "Who the d—l is the governor of Jamaica?" quoth you. "Why, one Sir Basil Keith," replies the Brad. If I had not behaved like a dog to you, perhaps you would have opened my letter the first of the parcel by this pacquet, and I should have had the supreme felicity of first informing you that *our Basil* has had that government conferred upon him in the most flattering, as well as the most honourable manner; refusing all recommendation to Lord Dartmouth, though he was offered an application from the first merchants; and having for competitors, Frederick Vane, Sir Alexander Gilmour, and Sir *George Rodney*, for whom I know the strongest interest was made from very respectable quarters. Well, this is not to the purpose, for Basil will tell you all these particulars, and I will not take the trouble of telling you how much I rejoice at this event; for if you were ten times as angry with me, you would nevertheless do me the justice to suppose all that.

My poor wife has lost our last-born child, and is in great affliction; but she desires to be remembered in the kindest manner. Though my girl was but five months old, I lost her with a regret which none but a Keith or a father can feel. Peace be with her!

Our governor Bob* has his foot upon the stool of repentance, for having rode a stumbling nag; but he will soon be well, and, in the mean time, he reads Dalrymple and laughs at patriots. Poor Rigby has the gout in both feet. He had your letter, and we drink your health at least once a week. If he could do you a

* Robert Drummond, Esq.

pleasure or a service, I will venture to say neither the gout nor any trouble would prevent his immediately attempting it. Why are all these people as much attached to you as I am, when they don't know you half so well?

Harry,* Fred,† with all the women, are well, and as profligate as ever. Loo still goes on, and the Governor of Jamaica will be *picked* and *pigeoned*, as his dignity demands. Miss Chalmers,‡ too, enquires after you, and calls you the first of ministers, and she thinks so. Her situation is a strange one; she is more unconnected than ever, and nothing but necessity keeps her where she now is.

Adieu, my dear friend,

J. B.

MR. BRADSHAW TO SIR R. M. KEITH.

South Audley-street, 11*th March*, 1773.

If there is any one subject upon which you write better than another, it is when you are pleased to express your indignation against your humble servants, who, for their sins, are condemned to pass their lives in this paltry island; to fast upon our beef and claret, and never to behold the sunshine of their Imperial, Royal, and Apostolic Majesties. These circumstances, *mon cher Chevalier*, ought to plead our excuse; in such situations the minds of men are not likely to be at ease, and why should they attempt to poison your enjoyment of the uninterrupted pleasures of Vienna, by their grievances?

They envy you no happiness; you want no increase; they love you too well to tease you with unavailing wishes, though they all lick their lips at your princes,

* Henry Drummond, Esq. † Lord Frederick Campbell.
‡ The cypher name for Lord North.

and rather blush when they are obliged to name their own shabby enjoyments. But times may mend; the Duchesses of Gloucester and Cumberland have opened their doors two evenings in every week, and as their assemblies do not fill, some of the "*Gang*" may get admittance; and when we can send you Royal anecdotes, Lord have mercy upon you! *Super, extra*-extraordinaries will not pay your postage!

The Drummonds, male and female, are well. Harry and Bess are the same laughing, good-humoured pair they used to be; and Bob and Tatty no worse. Fred and Ferry are neither fatter nor leaner; the Sebrights talk for ever of you, and her ladyship's passion does not seem abated by your absence. In short, the whole "*Gang*," with all their adherents, flourish. None of them have been brought to justice since you left them, but Sir Basil, who, being an old offender, is very deservedly *cast for transportation*.

Your letter of the 17th February was the best of all possible letters. I gave it to Lord North to read last night at the Oratorio; and he laughed aloud, in the face of the King, over against whom we happened to be sitting.*

* That some of Sir R. M. Keith's familiar epistles (though not exactly the facetious one in question) found their way to Royalty itself, seems not improbable; from his Majesty, in an audience to a young nobleman from Vienna, (the Earl of Morton,) when speaking in the highest terms of Sir Robert, alluding particularly to his "*delightful letters*." This epithet can hardly be deemed applicable to official dispatches, notwithstanding the terms in which the latter are characterised by Mr. Eden, (afterwards Lord Auckland,) then Under Secretary in the Foreign Department, in August 1774. "You will think yourself entitled to a much fuller acknowledgment of your dispatches than you have yet received. But what could we do? It would have been *no compliment* to you to say that in your description of the Imperial Cabinet, you had contrived to blend sound politics and *sterling wit*, in a degree of which this office has seen few instances. And when that idea was known to have presented itself to *all* to whom the dispatches in question were submitted, it was not the

You have only to choose your name: Lord North says he will not stand with you for a dozen of syllables; and he desires me to express his wishes that his friends on this side of the water would content themselves with such reasonable requests. I will give your list of princes and counts to Bob, to break Castleton's heart. If he thought you would introduce him as a *Joblinowsky* at any of your great dinners, he would set out post for Vienna.

I have been under some apprehensions of mischief for the last two days; but Mrs. *Tattina loves nonsense as much as ever.** If it had been otherwise, *Miss Smith*† would have been where you wish to see *Fanny Murray*.‡

A French regiment, returning from the East Indies, has taken a new method of making a rise in the corps. The officers had a quarrel with the Lieutenant-Colonel, and as they could not bring him to their way of thinking, they very politely threw him out of the cabin window. I should have no objection to a good number of those who are between you and *your* regiment, taking the benefit of sea-bathing in the same manner. I told Rigby I should write to you to-day, and he desires to be cordially remembered. *You sober fellows* never come to good! He is a martyr to gout.

Past four o'Clock, Thursday morning.

I am this moment returned from Lord Harrington's,§ where I have been playing at loo with Lady H., and some vile cats, who have robbed me, without giving me a moment's entertainment. Patience! I owe his

part of friendship to make further fuss about it. Ostracism is at an end; but few of us can yet bear to read much of the merits of a *live man*, if they are very great."

* Lord North is strong, and will continue so. (Private cypher.)

† Lord Gower. ‡ The Earl of Suffolk.

§ Then Secretary of State for the War Department.

lordship more than that; and, therefore, with an aching head, and empty purse, I will go to sleep.

Good night, dear Keith,

J. B.

11 *o'Clock.*

I am as dull this morning as the dullest Dutchman of your acquaintance, and I shall doze over this whole page before I leave my fireside. Something whispers to me, whenever I see Basil, that he will marry before he goes to his government, though I have no suspicion of any human, or divine woman. But he has twice told me, that if he could get a *right woman,* to be his friend and comforter, his happiness at Jamaica would be complete; and he has promised me *not* to marry a rich planter's widow, who is her own *negro-driver.*

Friday morning, 26th.

There is a report that the first regiment of Guards will be resigned. *Your friend* * had once a promise of it. I daresay the same *prudence* and *moderation* which made him refuse the Ordnance, will make him also refuse this regiment *at present.*

If you had not scoffed at my *roasted Directors,* what a fine account would this letter bring you, of a very extraordinary day in the House of Commons, on Monday last; when Burgoyne moved a resolution "*that no person entrusted with military or civil power could, by virtue of such power, acquire territories, or revenues, or any property for himself. That such acquisitions, when so made, belonged to the State; that several persons had illegally acquired large sums of money;*" and he concluded by saying, that he meant to follow these resolutions by one for obliging such persons to make *restitution.*

* General Conway.

I will only tell you that the Nabobs are on the gridiron, but you shall *not* have a steak. I *could* tell you, in five sides of paper, that Wedderburn, as a defence of Lord Clive, told Burgoyne, "*that those who throw stones should not live in glass houses;*" that he mentioned the charge made by Junius against the Colonel—that the Colonel cried aloud, "If *Junius* be in the house, or lurking in the gallery, he is an infamous lying scoundrel, and a cowardly assassin, and I will treat him as he deserves, whenever the miscreant is dragged forth to light"—that—but hang me if I write a word more upon the subject; and you may lick your lips, and wish you had not ridiculed my intelligence. Cocked and primed as I am, I should have run you off six sheets of writing before dinner; five of which will be lost, not only to you, but to the world, when your *State Papers* come to be published!

Things are not so satisfactory, and we have this day stopped paying off the men who were raised for the fleet. Take that as a political sop in the pan; but not a single cut of the roast; no, Sir, I will leave you to the imperfect information of Secretaries of State, and such fellows.

I have been at Portsmouth with the Earls of Suffolk, Sandwich, Rochfort, and Gower; and passed three days exceedingly to my satisfaction. I saw everything, and every kind of work performed in the yards, storehouses, bakehouses, &c. We went to Spithead in a yacht, and were saluted by the sixteen ships of the line, every one of which was manned, and lined with marines, as we sailed by them. We dined on board the Admiral, with all the Captains of the fleet; and I never saw so respectable a sight as the circle of brave fellows with whom I sat at table, every one of whom was fit to command the navy of England. The lords were delighted, and they have all sworn to use their utmost endeavours

to prevail on the King to see his fleet, which would certainly be exceedingly popular. Lord Suffolk talked of you every day. I showed him parts of your last letter, which pleased him much, and he desired me to tell you that *Osten** is sent to the very castle which was intended for the *Queen*. He said he had secret things to write you when he had a *proper opportunity*. I will write you the particulars you desire to know, about *Fanny Murray*, when a messenger goes to Vienna; of which *Fraser*† has promised to give me timely notice.

3 *o'Clock*.

I am this moment returned from St. James's, where I saw the remonstrance presented by the Lord Mayor, the Recorder, one Sheriff, one Alderman, and about ten shabby Common-councilmen. What a respectable voice of the people! His Majesty sent out word by the Lord Chamberlain, that he would not allow them to kiss his hand. Lord Mayor answered, he came there only *officially*, and thought his Majesty was *perfectly right*. When they were introduced to the Throne, Lord Chamberlain said to the King, "Sir, I am desired by the Lord Mayor to acquaint your Majesty, that he came here only *officially*." The remonstrance was then read by the Recorder, to which the King gave a most excellent answer, which I am sorry I cannot send you in his own words. The purport was, that he should be unjust to doubt that his people were convinced of his readiness, at all times, to hear, and redress their just complaints; but, at the same time, it would be highly improper to give the smallest countenance to ill-grounded jealousies, and misrepresentations; that the present application was so unfounded, and conceived in such disrespectful

* Count Osten, Foreign Minister of Denmark, of whose duplicity Sir R. M. Keith complains, during its unhappy revolution in 1772.

† Mr. Fraser, Private Secretary to the Earl of Suffolk.

terms, that he could not believe they seriously expected that any notice would be taken of it.

Adieu, my dear Chevalier.

P. S.—I shall speedily summon the committee of the "Gang" whom you have chosen to provide and propose a future lady. We all deprecate a Transylvanian or Croatian countess. If your house should be uncomfortable, it will be a cruel stroke upon the evening of my life. *Apropos* to marriage, the Duke of Orleans has followed some great examples in this country; and owned his marriage with Madame de Montesson; but all this you know better than I do, from the Dauphiness' private letters. Yours,

J. B.

SIR R. M. KEITH TO MR. BRADSHAW.

Vienna, March 27th, 1773.

Oho! my Lord! you are upon your marrowbones; are ye? and *peccavi* is the word. I thought I should bring you to that; but (as Billy Amherst says), his Majesty's troops *never plunder,* nor *kick those who are down;* therefore, I stretch out the friendly hand to lift you upon your legs again. And now, we start afresh, with the cordial innocence of two twin-brothers newly ushered into life by the skilful hand of Dr. Hunter.

Do you know, my dear Brad, that it is a shame for you, who have been bred in all the cursed, callous company of courtiers, jobbers, boroughmongers, and piebald parliament-men, to prove such a dunghill cock, in the article of facing an angry friend. Why, there is not an understrapper in office who would not have fought a better battle than you did. Whereas you just now submit to be looked upon as an honest good-natured fellow; which is an error in judgment, a want of *parts* (as Peter Taylor said of my father, when he returned home a beggar). *Apropos* to beggar! what

say you to Sir Basil? His Excellency the Governor? Lord! lord! when will the beneficence of my royal master end? As I hope for mercy, 'tis a fair heat, the King against the Keiths—goodness against gratitude! and a close run thing it will be, as any match at Newmarket these ten years. I'll tell you one thing, Brad, there's an old gentleman in the kingdom—the parent of the Keiths, one who is blest with fine feelings, and a steady good heart. I must think that the breath of that man's blessing upon the royal hand which deals out honour and opulence to all his family, may create a pleasing sensation, and be something more than an empty tribute of thanks. What must I do, my friend, to keep pace with so many accumulated favours? Why, what I can; and that with a zeal, an ardent zeal, adequate to the call upon me; and if Heaven shall please to grant me an opportunity, my Suffolks, my Norths, my Rigbys, and all my *Gang* shall not blush for me. I write to worthy Lord Dartmouth; and if I write nonsense to him, it shall be the nonsense of a full heart. My sweet and beautiful Basil has ere this got fairly astride upon his government; and I trust that by dint of good plain sense, and fair dealing, he will sit very snug in the saddle. The fellow has a warm heart, and despises money; and that, my lord, goes a good way in the qualification of a governor. I made him swear to avoid partialities, and set speeches, and to remember who got him, and made him what he is.*

* Akin to this judicious and fraternal counsel, was that given to the new functionary by the highest legal authority of his native land. On learning that his commission as Governor, also involved within it that of Chief Judge of the Island, (one alike alien to the habits and feelings of a sailor), he expressed to the great Lord Mansfield his conscientious scruples on the subject. His Lordship's answer soon removed them: "Basil," said he, "you have excellent common sense; always decide according to that, and nine times in ten you will be right. But mind, never give a *reason* for your decision; that will infallibly be wrong!"

Oh! I'll be bound for Basil! he may do an unwise thing, but I'll be hang'd if (willingly) he either does an unjust or a mean one.

I am preparing for a visit this summer from my good friend Mr. Conway. It is an old promise, and I hope he will have no reason to repent the performance of it. We have rare shows for soldiers here, and some too for fine gentlemen like yourself, if you were not so d—dly lazy.

But now, my Brad, let me talk to you about your three letters, for I have no less than three in one week, and excellent ones they are. The first, by the faithful *Nat*, was hum-drum, and written in low spirits. I knew that you had some devilry in your head, or that your heart was not at ease. It would have puzzled my poor brain to guess at your distress, in order to share it; but luckily your other two letters, penned in high good humour, came to relieve me. By the bye, the book of Bunbury's prints was a present worthy of an emperor; and I should hardly have exchanged it against a patent of Prince of his Holy Empire. I laughed myself black in the face at the "*Shaver* and the *Shavee*;" and my German servants, who had never heard the vulgar sound of a loud laugh, ran into the room to see what the deuce had befallen his Excellency. You must know that we never laugh here beyond a gentle simper, that dimples the cheek, unless when a grandee or a dear creature happens to be immoderately witty, and then we indulge them with a flying titter. They say through Europe that John Bull is a grave, morose fellow; but hang me if John does not shake his fat sides with ten times the glee that I ever saw since I left him. My service to every body that wishes me back for home consumption.

Yours,

R. M. K.

MR. BRADSHAW TO SIR R. M. KEITH.

South Audley-street, 16th March, 1773.

THE Jamaica people residing here are really pleased with the appointment of Sir Basil, who was well known to many of them upon the island. I am assured, from good authority, that he may *may do the thing properly,* and yet save at least 4000*l.* a year. To be sure that is very short of what your Excellency saves at Vienna, but what of that? Sir Basil ought to be content, as he is but a younger brother. He has laid down very prudent rules for his conduct while in England, and at his Government respecting his *subjects;* and if I do not much mistake his character, he will be firm to them. I congratulated your worthy father the day Sir Basil was appointed, with a satisfaction that is not to be expressed. I impatiently wait for his answer, as I shall have a new pleasure in sharing the happiness which his letter describes. He is the most amiable of men, *though your father.* I wish he were less unfortunate in his children.

I wish *you* had provided for the Queen of Denmark upon some other fund;* not but that Jamaica will bear it exceedingly well; and to be sure you will deservedly be very popular for sacrificing poor Basil, for the sake of her Danish Majesty. Let you alone for patriotic deeds! Suppose you were to pay off the debts of the Civil List out of your own appointments? It would be very acceptable, at least to the creditors; and you would be likely, in that case, to receive the money from me for the china.

* To the original of this letter is still affixed with sealing-wax, a newspaper paragraph, to the following purport. "It is confidently said the Queen of Denmark is to have 5000*l. a year,* out of the salary and emoluments of a certain government lately given away. Still may he sing the Highland Queen!" A correspondent asks, "What would Admiral Boscawen have said, if alive, to see his little Scotch Midshipman so wonderfully promoted?"

Apropos, Lord Holland has once more paid Stephen Fox's debts, which amounted to the trifling sum of 86,000*l.*! Charles's, I am informed, from very good authority, are ascertained, and as they only rise to 110,000*l.*, it will be shabby if his father should leave them unpaid. Charles pays 10,400*l.* a year in annuities; and many of the annuitants who have been applied to, declare that they will not sell them, as they are regularly paid. His establishment, exclusive of his race horses (which must be considered as his *Ways and Means*), is calculated to cost upwards of 6,000*l.* a year, so that he must annually raise a supply of 17,000*l.* for the current expenses; besides his bill of *extraordinaires,* incurred and *not provided for.* You must agree with me that he is a *great financier,* and his practical knowledge must enable him to cut a very brilliant figure at the head of the treasury, when he gets there. Adieu, my dear Keith; if your patience is not tired, you are Job himself. The Duke of Grafton, who has this moment called upon me, and to whom I showed the *measure of your infliction,* desires to be remembered in the kindest manner.

There is a report very current that Miss Chalmers * is going to retire, but it is without the smallest foundation. I shall not, however, be surprised when there is foundation for the report, though I shall be sincerely sorry.

Once more adieu,

J. B.

MR. BRADSHAW TO SIR R. M. KEITH.

South Audley-street, 23rd March, 1773.

Hazy weather, Master Noah! upon the Continent; but you know more of the matter than I do, and,

* Lord North.

besides, what has that to do with *our* correspondence? which, thanks be to nonsense, cannot be affected by the ambition or timidity of any, or all of the powers of Europe?

The India business begins to grow serious; not for government, but for the *men of millions*. A report will to-morrow be laid before the House, by the Secret Committee, which will state the revenues of the East India Company in India, and the malversations of their servants abroad; it will be followed by strong instances of (at *least*) mismanagement in their Directors at home. Sir George Colebrooke and Purling have quitted the Direction, as being likely to be accused persons; and it will not be an easy matter to settle a house list of Directors for the election next month. The Duke of Richmond has qualified himself for a Director, and is at the head of the proprietors' list, of which, if they succeed, he is to be chairman. His Grace lives in the city, and attends all general courts; at one of which he was told, that nothing showed the low state of opposition so strongly, as that his Grace was reduced to harangue at Leadenhall Street, from having no other place where he could display his oratory. The choice of Directors appears to me, at this moment, to be one of the most difficult matters that government has to manage. There is no time for manœuvring; and it is a serious business to intrust the loan of 1,500,000*l.*, which the public are to lend the Company, in the hands of persons against whom, I am informed, very strong matters of accusation will be brought out by the two committees. The House has this day resolved that the dividend shall not exceed six per cent. till this loan is paid off; nor seven per cent. till their bond debts shall be reduced to 1,500,000*l.*

I send you the remonstrance, which is to be presented next Friday. The Lord Mayor had doubts about its

legality, and would not consent to present it till he had the Recorder's opinion that he could not incur a penalty. You will remember that his lordship was the chief promoter of the first remonstrance; and, upon being asked why he had so much altered his opinion about remonstrances, he said, because he found they answered no good purpose; as he hoped, that if the first was disregarded, the next step would be *drawing the sword!*

Adieu, my dear Keith,

J. B.

SIR R. M. KEITH TO MR. BRADSHAW.

Vienna, April 6th, 1773.

Our correspondence, my dear Brad, now canters along in the pleasantest manner imaginable; not a rub—not a ruffle—all velvet and green sward. My only fear is, that you will soon discover that you have a bad bargain of it; and that giving every week a salmon for a minnow (to speak in the style of our friend Piscator*) may be generous, but by no means profitable. What the devil can I do for materials to pay for the postage, and for wherewithal to satisfy the curiosity of a man of fashion like you? What are trifles to a man who has the condescension to talk to me of Committees and Carib wars, of roasted Directors, and all the wonders of Leadenhall-street?

But I must descend from this sublime subject, and stoop to treat of vulgar men and things. The Governor of Jamaica (I beg his Excellency's pardon for putting him in that list) is certainly in the way of being very rich; and I own I am curious to see what sort of a monster a *monied Keith* will make. I was tempted some time ago to try the experiment in my own person, but as Sir Basil is in a speedier line of wealth, I mean

* Robert Drummond, Esq., whose love of angling is often alluded to.

to give over the pursuit, and dispose of his Majesty's bounty in giving the travelling Johns some good beef and claret. Could I but tempt three or four of the *Gang* to share in the spoil, that would be a blessing indeed. But you are too snug at home, and too lazy all of you, ever to try your fortunes in foreign parts.

Ten thousand thanks to you, Brad, for your well-chosen scraps of newspapers. How the devil did the Public Advertiser find out the story of the 5000*l.* pension upon Jamaica? * But the fellow smelt out my own private pension of 3000*l.*† the very day I got it! Mr. Woodfall is a jewel of a man for a bit of secret intelligence.

MR. BRADSHAW TO SIR ROBERT M. KEITH.

South Audley-street, 2nd April, 1773.

Poor Sir George Colebrook, who has for many weeks been fluctuating between immediate bankruptcy and the hopes of collecting from his scattered fortunes a sufficiency to keep his bank afloat, was obliged yesterday to stop. I never esteemed or liked him, but I am among the very few who pity his family, and feel for what the poor man must suffer, who, by his own eagerness for accumulation, has been thrown from a splendid fortune to (I fear) a doubtful competency; for I never knew the wreck of a great bankruptcy turn out according to the expectations of those who thought themselves best informed of the value of the effects. I flatter myself this event will have no influence upon the banking business; but of this I shall be able to inform you before I finish my letter. Our friends cannot be alarmed,

* The absurd story before alluded to, and *extant* in the *printed* fragment appended to Mr. Bradshaw's letter, of the *Queen of Denmark* being thus provided for at Sir Basil Keith's expense.

† Equally apocryphal, it is needless to say, with the above.

but must stand, firm as a rock, even if there should be a storm.*

There is no truth in the report that Sir Basil had 20,000*l.* in Sir George's hand, which I mention, lest it should have reached you and made you uneasy. Allow me now, my dear Chevalier, to request that when you have paid the due tribute of sorrow to Sir George's mishap, you will draw a useful lesson from what has happened to him. You are now (by Mr. Woodfall's† favour) in a situation that produces you a large share of 50,000*l.* per annum, which he very truly states to be received by a *few Murrays*. Content yourself, my dear friend, for the present, even with the 15,000*l.* or 20,000*l.* a-year you at present enjoy, and do not, like the unfortunate Baronet, by too eagerly grasping at more, lose the *trifle* I have stated you to possess, upon such respectable and undoubted authority.

I have not paid you for your china yet, but the good time will come, if no more bankers break. The times are hard, and the poor of all ranks are severely pinched. Even Charles Fox finds a difficulty in raising money. He was under a necessity of staking 2000*l.* at Newmarket last Monday, for some matches that were to be run that day. The twelve tribes of Israel were all tried, but their hearts were uncircumcised and hard, and he could not raise a single guinea. He declared this at White's and Almack's on the preceding Friday night; he seriously offered 6000*l.* at the end of six months, for an immediate supply of 3000*l.*; and, at last, thinking himself sure of winning his matches, he offered 500*l.* for the loan of 2000*l.*, till the following Tuesday night. No offers would tempt his friends, nor soften the hard hearts of the Jews; and poor Charles was in the last stage of distress. In this

* The Messrs. Drummonds.

† Editor of the Public Advertiser, and publisher of Junius.

situation, with five guineas, his whole fortune, in his pocket, he came into White's an hour before dinner on Saturday; there he found Harry Cavendish, (the House of Commons note-writer) with whom he began to play billiards for a guinea; and having a run of luck, he won, with the assistance of some bets, eighty-five guineas; which enabled him to go to Almack's at night, where, without losing one cast, he won 3000*l.*! His good fortune then left him, and he lost back 700*l.*; but he cut at three o'clock in the morning, with 2300*l.*, which enabled him to make his stakes at Newmarket. All this I know to be exactly true. I have not heard what he did at Newmarket, but I will venture to pronounce, that no Lord of the Treasury ever had such a practical knowledge of *circulation*, nor such extensive dealings with the *monied interest* of this country. If he escapes a pistol in a gloomy hour, when the *ways and means* are desperate, what has not this country to expect when he is at the head of its finances.

Friday Evening.

Charles Fox has lost every shilling he had, at Newmarket! The great meeting is Monday se'nnight, and he must win more than 3000*l.*, for none can he borrow. Lord Tyrawley not yet dead; no resignation; the ribbons not yet given away. Rigby still suffering in the gout. Oh! for a letter from you, to make him laugh in the violence of the fit!

Has Basil written you the conversation he had at Court with the lovely Mrs. D'Oyley?* "Give me leave, *Sir John*, to wish you joy, which I do with great pleasure. How is the *General* at *Berlin?* And give me leave to inquire after the worthy old gentleman. Pray how is *Sir Charles?*" Upon the honour of a cream-coloured gentleman, I am a faithful historian, and make

* A lady of the day famous for her *misnomers*.

no additions. But she could make no mistake equal to poor D'Oyley's, when he married her.

Lord Clive is to make his defence on Monday, in the House of Commons. He has published his famous speech, which I will send you by the first messenger.

Adieu, my dear friend,

T. B.

MR. BRADSHAW TO SIR R. M. KEITH.

April 6th, 1773.

When I have written your Excellency five complete dozen of letters, perhaps I shall hear from you again. I feel daggers at my disappointment, but will write none.

An express is this day arrived from Portsmouth with letters from St. Vincent. The Caribs were totally subdued, and a peace made with them, the 17th of last February; the total loss of our troops is about 110 men.

SIR R. M. KEITH TO MR. BRADSHAW.

Vienna, April 23rd, 1773.

What an abominable little spitfire dog of a letter your's of the 6th April is! I feel daggers, say you, but I will write none. Yes, but you will, Mr. Brad, and poisoned ones too; but I have a target which is proof against them all, and that target is *innocence immaculate*. Can you forget, you base man you, that five long months had passed without a line? But I will be calm. I received several of your letters together. I wrote instantly to thank you, and have been scribbling ever since, and here am I abused and vilified. *Sed integer vitæ, scelerisque purus*, &c. I wish your lordship understood Latin, for I have twenty quotations at my fingers' ends, which would cut you up most classically. But I shall have a peace-offering from you by next post, and all will be well again.

To have done with the *see-saw* of recrimination, let me tell you a bit of my mind, and upon a very serious subject. You must know, my friend, that I have for the last fortnight been cogitating, and comparing, and *rule of three-ing*, all my ways and means of happiness. I have said to myself—"Thou hast struggled through life cheerfully, and (with the help of such friends as few men possess), thou hast reached the level of thy utmost wish, at an age when enjoyment ought to take the place of ambition. If I mistake thee not, thy turn is domestic, and the scene of thy enjoyment must be under thine own roof. What is thy hobby-horse?—A *woman!* Dost thou require an angel, an heiress, or a Catherine Macauley? No, no, no! a fireside companion, with a hale constitution, and a delicate mind."

Thus far have I gone in soliloquy—the rest remains with you and Fred, and Bob and Harry, and the Hays, who, in self-defence, must provide me with a British housewife; else, in the heat of my pursuit, and with all the wrong-headedness of an old bachelor, I will take to myself (and consequently saddle their society with) some Transylvanian or Croatian Countess, with five hundred ancestors in her pedigree, and just as many crowns in her pocket. What she wants in wealth may be made up in pride and presumption; and I may hope that hereafter, when I come to settle among you, her ladyship will revenge the wrongs I have suffered, by keeping the *Gang* in continual hot water; and dashing a little of her vinegar and wormwood into the daily cup of every member of it. But I scorn to strike such a stroke by surprise; and therefore, I give you all a twelvemonth's notice to *cater* for me—or, look to yourselves.

I am glad that Sir George Colebrooke is likely to retire with the small pittance of 180,000*l.* I like moderation in others, and shall one day give an example

myself, by retiring with somewhat near the same sum, whenever I shall have paid off my score of gratitude to my King and country. Why, my dear Brad, should a man, whose name is recorded with never-dying honour in the "Town and Country Magazine," give himself up to turmoil and trouble, in order to acumulate excessive wealth? Has not my worthy friend, Count Osten, (that sage and inflexible statesman) withdrawn himself from state troubles, and worldly grandeur, and with a *cool three hundred* a year, gone to turn his pen into a ploughshare in the healthy wilds of Jutland? Has not Count Rantzau (that staunch and uncorrupted patriot) fled from those honours which bloomed around his brows, and sought a philosophic retirement in Switzerland? Has not General Koller Banner?—Has not General Eichstadt? * But I am tired of *has nots*, and shall therefore only beg of your lordship, for the sake of moralising, (and for the honour of my penetration,) to cast an eye upon what has passed in the last ten months, in that blessed capital of Copenhagen. Think, my friend, how comfortable I feel in my present mansion, and judge what ought to be my thankfulness to those who chose it for me! You live amongst my friends and patrons—tell them how strongly that sentiment is impressed upon my mind. Yours,

R. M. K.

MR. BRADSHAW TO SIR R. M. KEITH.

Tuesday, 13th April, 1773.

Every *Brad* in the world is desirous of being employed for *Monsieur le Chevalier*. A most excellent poem, laughing at Sir William Chambers' dissertation on Oriental gardening, has been published. It was

* The leading conspirators in the Danish Revolution—all disgraced and exiled.

magnificently printed, with many acres of margin, and too large for a letter. I expressed a wish that I could send it to you, and I found it this evening in my study, copied by Mrs. Bradshaw, who only desires in return to be remembered to you in the kindest manner. You do, or you do not remember Sir William's work. After telling you of a great Chinese author who informed him that some plants will grow best in clay, some in sand, some in low ground, some on hills, some in the sun, and some in the shade, with many other recondite truths, he informs you that in the Emperor of China's gardens, for the entertainment of the Emperor and his women, there is a fortified town, with its posts, streets, public squares, temples, markets, shops, and tribunals of justice, in short with every thing that is at Pekin, only on a smaller scale. Some of the eunuchs personate porters; fruits are cried about in the streets of the mock city, and dexterous slaves act the part of thieves, pick-pockets, and sharpers, who are occasionally taken up by the watch, conveyed before the judges, and sometimes severely bastinadoed, which seems to be rather serious for a joke. If you have not read Sir William's dissertation, what I have written of it may throw a light upon Mrs. Bradshaw's present,* which has been more admired than any production of the last season. It is not strange that I should be partial to it, as the author has been so good as to present me with an exalted station upon the *velvet of Richmond lawn.**

Lord Frederick has written to you. I dined with

* The poem alluded to, (too well known for transcription,) *viz.*, "The Heroic Epistle to Sir William Chambers," from the pen of Anstey, the author of the Bath Guide, thus concludes :—

> "Be these the rural pleasures that attend
> Great Bradshaw's leisure; these shall best unbend
> His royal mind, whene'er, from state withdrawn,
> He treads the velvet of his Richmond lawn."

him on Friday, and we drank your health with a warmth and affection that would have disarmed your anger in a trice, if you could have peeped and listened from behind the door. The Drummonds are all well. Bob and Tatty had their *tails singed* last Friday morning. About three o'clock a fire broke out in their kitchen, which, with all the offices out of doors, was burned to the ground. The house was saved, but the family routed, and Tatty made her escape in a great-coat without shoes or stockings. If the governor had not kept the door to the offices shut, the house would have been wholly destroyed. So say the firemen; and we, who are *toad-eaters* to Bob, swear it, to compliment the governor upon his conduct, which must promote him to the direction of the Fire Office.

Notwithstanding the contemptuous manner in which you talk of *Committees,* I will tell you that the *whole House,* (who are for ever told that the eyes of all Europe are on them, and who, if they were as modest as I am, would *all blush* if they believed it,) in a Committee upon Indian affairs, have resolved to lend the East India Company 1,400,000*l.*, to enable them to discharge all claims that will be upon them from this time to Michaelmas 1774, *provided* that this loan be accompanied by such regulations for the future administration of the affairs of the Company, as may prevent their being brought a second time into their present situation. These regulations will keep the Parliament sitting a great part of the summer, and perhaps may possibly find it as *hot* a one as ever they felt in Indostan. You may tell me that you don't care a farthing for all this—may be so; but I will not sit twelve hours in a stinking house and vile company, if I am not to export the importance I derive from it to foreign parts and great ministers! Do not disgust me for the sake of this poor country. What would become of it, or of what use are

your negotiations, were I to resign or retire to the solitude of Hampton Court Palace?

The City yesterday, in Common Hall assembled (which means a meeting of about an hundred blackguards), voted a remonstrance to the Throne. We are now so used to them, that even Lord Falmouth stands fire like a dragoon horse; and they are as little regarded as one of Burke's speeches. You know, or you do not, that Barré has resigned his commission of Lieut.-Colonel, because the rank of Colonel was given to Morison, the Quarter-Master General. *I* would have given Barré the rank, because this resignation gives him a consequence with his friends which I would have denied him. I gave my opinion to the bloody Barrington, and he is rather sorry he did not take it; but they no more mind Noll Bluff, than if he were not in the land of the living. Adieu, my dear Keith. I have not yet paid you for the china. Some acts of friendship and some of extravagance, have distressed me for some months in money matters; but I am growing a little *fatter* in the purse, and will soon pay my debt. I make you no excuses, as I know your *affluent circumstances* make it a matter of little importance to you. If I were as sure of your friendship I should be perfectly easy.

T. B.

To return to the fire which *un-kitchened* the governor.* The alarm was so sudden and so serious, that when the children were collected, and Tatty wrapped in her great-coat, they retired to Hope and Whately's house, when, having secured their persons, they began to think of their effects. Tatty† sent with much anxiety for a drawer, containing the letters of *one Keith*; and Bob soon after appeared, bringing into the place of safety, not his papers nor his plate, but a fishing-rod and a

* R. Drummond, Esq. † Mrs. Drummond.

box of his choicest flies. These two circumstances are exactly true. What a fine thing is nationality! The watchman who stands in Spring Gardens is a Scotchman. When he thundered at Bob's door, and brought him to the window, the governor asked him where the fire was? St. Andrew answered, "It is somewhere behind; but I came first to your honour, because you are of my own country."

Lord North has moved a call of the House for the 26th; wisely thinking that the *blue sky* would otherwise call all the country gentlemen home, and that it will not be proper to carry important questions by a small number of place-men. In consequence of his motion, the Speaker, as usual, wrote to the sheriffs to give notice to the members in their several counties, which has brought him an answer from the sheriffs of London and Westminster, that would *formerly* have set the House of Commons on fire. They inform the Speaker that, pursuant to his orders, they have given notice to the members for the cities of London and Westminster, and to Sir John Glyn, and *John Wilkes*, members for the county of Middlesex! We shall put it in our pockets, I dare say, as usual.

T. B.

I am not well, my dear Keith. I am nervous and shabby, and my letter is dull, and smells of my disorder. Adieu: my heart is sound and will be always young.

A thousand thanks for your letter of the 27th March, which I have this moment received. It has done me more good than the whole College could have done me, but I am not in spirits to answer it by this post. I would have sent you Sir Joseph's letter, if I could have supposed you had not the newspapers. Indeed, my dear Keith, I cannot correspond with a man who does not

read them; and you must have a weekly journal at least, or your ignorance will be beyond all bearing. Parts, learning, I laugh at them all, if your *parts* do not lead you to draw your *learning* from Harry Woodfall, J. Miller, and such respectable authors. If the postage comes to 10*l.* I care not; and you receive with this an account of Sir Joseph's quarrel, and also Lord Townshend's and Lord Bellamont's; for they will bind well together. Adieu; Sir Joseph's letter shall follow as soon as I get it.

MR. BRADSHAW TO SIR R. M. KEITH.

16*th April*, 1773.

I AM better than I was, my dear Keith, but I still feel the secretaryship of the Treasury, and my nerves are shattered to pieces; but hang grievances, my boys are all at home, and in perfect health, and I will enjoy in them, what I want in myself. Do you know that I have cut you out a little business, for your leisure hours? You are to determine what I shall do with all and each of my four boys. The eldest is a boy of sound parts, the second a very extraordinary boy, with quick and brilliant parts, and I should think would succeed in the law; the other two you know are infants. You see, my dear Keith, that I shall make no ceremony when I have any burden to lay upon your shoulders. If I should die, I will leave you the whole family, as a legacy; and as you are an advocate for a married life, you may take post at the head of a battalion at once.*

Mr. Hart, who being a pretty gentleman, must be a friend of yours, is turned out of the banking-house, and

* Little did the playful writer foresee how soon and literally his prediction would be verified! Within a year, his sudden and unexpected death—leaving his family apparently indifferently provided for—consigned his widow and children to a friendship which it will be seen on the occurrence of the event, realised his warmest anticipations.

may now accompany the *Count* in his next tour to the Continent. It is very dangerous to have any dealings with *you* foreign ministers, and I am resolved to owe you money no longer.

Suppose I were now to take some notice of your Excellency's modest letter of the 27th March. So! when the natural sweetness and softness of my disposition induces me to make concessions, I am to be rewarded by abuse! and gibbetted with the title of a good sort of man! Why, neither Woodfall nor J. Miller ever treated me so cruelly. Pray, good Mr. Plenipo, don't sink me into a *good sort of a man;* a character that becomes only the deputy of a ward. I had forgot that I was engaged with the prince of negotiators. I should have thought of the brass that adorns the forehead of his Majesty's chosen envoy. By the bye, the man who could bully a King, his ministry, an ambitious mother, and a whole country,* must be a very impudent fellow! and it is not strange that a poor gentle Lord of the Admiralty, whose disposition, as well as his face, is *couleur de crême,* should fall under the practices of such a person. What you say about Basil's appointment brought tears in my eyes, and they were tears of much satisfaction. I don't care whether you approve or not; but I shall show your letter to Lord Dartmouth, as the most certain method of having that part of it reported *in a certain place.*

All the Drummonds supped with me last night, and I did not fail to communicate to them your *kind* remembrance of the whole family. If anger don't make Tatty write to you, your chance must be desperate. Bess, with her usual smile, says you are an impudent dog.

T. B.

* Alluding to Sir R. M. Keith's spirited conduct in Denmark.

MR. BRADSHAW TO SIR R. M. KEITH.

23*rd April*, 1773.

Wednesday was a day of days. From the most perfect tranquillity that reigned in the Admiralty on Tuesday, we were plunged at once, the next day, into all the preparations for war. You know that the French are preparing a fleet of twelve sail of the line, at Toulon. *You* may also know what they intend to do with this fleet, or you may amuse yourself with forming a thousand brilliant conjectures upon the subject; all this is not my business, who only mean to inform you of facts in my authentic *Gazette*. Fifteen ships of the line were yesterday ordered to be immediately fitted out for sea, to reinforce Sir Peter Dennis in the Mediterranean. The following is the list:—The Barfleur of 90 guns; the Resolution, Egmont, Lennox, Royal Oak, Terrible, Albion, Dublin, Kent, and Torbay, of 74 guns each; the Boyne of 70, and the Worcester, St. Albans, and Somerset, of 64 each. They are to be completed, to the highest complement of men, and the seventy companies of marines are to be augmented twenty men a company. Fifteen more ships of the line will be put into commission, and grim-visaged War seems peeping abroad everywhere; but I hope the fleet will only be one of *observation*. The way to secure peace is certainly to be prepared for war; and I will venture to say, without laying claim to the smallest degree of merit, or wishing to rob Lord Sandwich of any part of the credit he so well deserves, that the navy of the country never was in so effective a state as it is at this present; and that no fleet ever was ready for service so soon after it was ordered, as this will be. Upon second thoughts, I am too modest, and might lay claim to some merit; for—*I signed all the orders.*

I kept my intention, and yesterday showed your letter

about Basil's appointment, to Lord Dartmouth. He was much pleased with my letter; still more with the one to himself. He respects your father and your Excellency exceedingly; but he is positively *in love* with Basil; and I am ashamed to say, he said more of him than I could have found words to say, though I love him as well, and have known him longer. The Knight is returned in perfect health from Bath, where he went, to break into a succession of Jamaican feasts. He showed me your incomparable letter to him, which I cannot sufficiently admire.

You promised to write to me by the last post, but as the song says, "I find it nothing so." Yet I am patient, and don't mount the great horse, like the laird of Murrayshall, &c. I wish *I* had bullied a Queen, I might then *domineer* like some folks, and be minded as they are. Bob, the governor, bids me ask you whether you have forgot a *certain* business, about which in *certain* cases, you were to write to him in a *certain* manner? So much for my commission, executed in your own way. I hope you understand me, which will be more than I do myself; for my instructions were *secret*, but not *confidential*.

Basil returns to-morrow to Bath. He says, he found the waters had been of use to him; but I don't think he seemed to want them when he left town.

A very melancholy and extraordinary event has happened at the Castle at Salthill. A company of eight persons dined there last Saturday, and were all taken ill that evening. Captain Needham of the Guards (Lord Kilmurray's son), a Mr. Isherwood of Windsor, and a third person whose name I do not know, are already dead; Mr. Mason, a commander in the navy, is dying, and the other four are dangerously ill. They have not yet found out from what cause this unhappy business has proceeded.

Wednesday.

Two more of the persons whom I mentioned to you above, as having dined at Salthill, are dead. It seems there were some felons removing from Reading Gaol put into a stable at the inn; that the gaol distemper is now in that prison; and the persons who have died, all, from curiosity, or some other motive, went to see these fellows. This I mention, in justice to your friend, Mrs. Partridge, whose wine, or cooking, has been supposed to have poisoned these unfortunate persons.

I send you Wilkes's letter to the Speaker. It is a modest and decent epistle. The House met yesterday. The Speaker informed them of the return he had received from the Sheriffs of Middlesex, and not one word was said! *"Where is the spirit of Onslow, the dead."*

The Speaker has not mentioned Wilkes's letter. Adieu. T. B.

MR. BRADSHAW TO SIR R. M. KEITH.

April 27th.

Poor Campbell, who had a Highland corps with you in Germany, and who, a few weeks ago got the Lieutenant-Governorship of Chelsea Hospital, which he told me put him at the height of all his wishes, is dead. Peace be to his ashes! I once passionately loved his wife; but she took to face-painting, and I was cured. She has a good fortune, and if you want a wife who will be of any complexion you please, I will make your proposals.

Wilkes came yesterday to the House, in consequence of the Sheriff's summons. He was refused to be sworn in the Court of Wards, because the Clerk of the Crown would not give him a certificate of his return for Middlesex. Serjeant Glyn informed the House of his attendance and of the refusal of the Clerk; and he

moved that Mr. Wilkes might be called in to make his complaint; which motion, after some few absurd speeches upon so absurd a business, was rejected by 227 to 124. A great mob collected about the House, but it was a mob of curiosity, and behaved very quietly.

"Grim-visaged war hath smoothed his wrinkled front." Lord Stormont writes, that on Tuesday last (the day our fleet was ordered for sea), the Duke d'Arguillon informed him that the armament at Toulon was *stopped,* and that they should not *exercise* their fleet at soonest before the end of summer! You know all this officially. I beg pardon for troubling you with any politics of my *cooking,* when you have it in such plenty from a *Cordon Bleu.* However, my coarse fare may give you an appetite for your *secret and confidential* feasts. Yours,

T. B.

MR. BRADSHAW TO SIR R. M. KEITH.

30th April, 1773.

We begin with the Nabobs next week, but I see plainly they will get out of the scrape with the loss of character (which many of them set no value on) and a very small *snip of their tails.* In this country, if a man gets a great deal of money by any means, he is secure of keeping it; and if he will spend it liberally, nobody will consider what he was or how he came by it, while they are eating his meat, drinking his wine, or winning his money. If he is obliged to retrench, his fame is undone, and mankind are so *virtuous,* they will not keep him company.

We have countermanded the orders for commissioning the ships, which were to replace the guard-ships intended for the Mediterranean; but we do not relax in preparing the fifteen ships of the line which I mentioned in a former gazette, till we are sure that our neighbours

will act according to their declaration; besides, they did not know of our *actual* preparations when the declaration I wrote to you was made to Lord Stormont; they had only been threatened with them. I am told the French Ambassador goes about saying that France will not disarm. A few days will determine all this; in the mean time we are raising men, and I do believe we shall complete the fifteen ships without pressing. When they are all at Portsmouth, I shall go down and pass a few days on board Barrington's ship. Don't you think *that* will exceedingly alarm the French? But you *ministers* never give an opinion but in *cypher*, which is the reason so many of you are *cyphers* yourselves.

And so Sir Basil is grown so fond of *rabbits*, that he is resolved to have a *Warren** of his own! I have found out the reason of his finding so much benefit from the Bath waters; and I have abused him for keeping me so many days deprived of the satisfaction which I always receive when anything good happens to the *Keiths*. She must be a good woman, for she has generosity, which seldom grows in an indifferent soil.

Adieu my dear Chevalier. I am going to the country with Rigby, who desires me to present his kindest compliments to you, and who orders me to finish my letter and mount my horse. *Apropos*, do you ever ride?

T. B.

LORD FREDERICK CAMPBELL TO SIR R. M. KEITH.†

Coombank, April 11th, 1773.

THERE was a time, my dear Keith, when the *Gang* had a great idea of your knowledge, address, and dispatch

* Sir Basil was on the eve of marriage with a lady of that name.

† Lord Frederick Campbell, Lord Registrar for Scotland, and a distinguished member of the *Gang*. This letter, being alluded to both in the previous and subsequent ones, may be properly introduced here.

in business. Dresden promised something, and the *little* bustle of a Danish Court made us look up to you with astonishment. But this is all over. Sir Basil has formed, undertaken, and executed, a great plan almost in the same instant. The *Gang* think if he were at your elbow, he would be as expeditious in breaking the present Triple League against Poland, as Sir William Temple was formerly in completing the Triple Alliance. He is indeed a great man; so are you, my dear Sir Robert; but at Jamaica the Admiral must take place of the Knight.

True excellence consists in governing well, and a good government is an excellent thing. And then Basil is as generous as if he had never been poor. He has already bestowed a very great pension upon the *Queen of Denmark*;* many thousands are remitting to you, and he has with both hands been dispensing immense treasures to us at *Loo*.

These are fine times; the *Gang* grows rich, and yet the Drummonds are not poor: how astonishing! But they are able to stand the call of half the world. This is a secret Sir George Colebrooke was not in the least acquainted with; but he never dealt in the riches of the heart.

Your last memorial, my dear Keith, is not to be answered. However, as you hold out peace to the worthy silent gentlemen of Charing-cross, I am not without hopes that it is to be extended to all the *contracting parties*: for one, I accept of it on any terms.

We were, indeed, excellent men when setting out upon our travels with one hundred and fifty guineas, with difficulty squeezed from both our patrimonies; but we are still valuable. For my own part, by planting, farming, improving, and building, at Ardincaple, Coombank, and London, I expect soon to return to my pristine

* Alluding to the ridiculous paragraph before quoted.

value. In the mean time, I wish to enable you to swear to my hand-writing. Lord North has put the empire of Hindostan to nurse for six years, with as much ease as Sir Matthew Lamb used to do the estate of an English peer; with this small difference, however, that the Baronet thought only of himself, Lord North of the public.

As soon as I am reduced to my former poverty, I shall again begin to think of a well-built German post-chaise; nor is that thought perhaps so very distant. At present, behold me at my villa, where every kind of work is going on, but that where *Pam*, instead of Mr. Brown, presides. To-morrow industry will begin; for I expect Harry and his *Tartar* wife (your own expression) will make me a visit. The only business of this little week is to be mirth, jollity, and gambling. When I return to the world the silent gentleman shall open his mouth. This only comes to bespeak peace. Forget and forgive. Love me as I love you, and be assured that I am, dear Keith, yours most truly.

Just a word more. I have a cousin I have some hopes of; he is seventeen, an Ensign in the Guards (Edmonstone by name); he has been one year at Glasgow, three months on parade, and is lately gone to Brunswick for education. What should he do next? Would Vienna be a good school for him some time hence? His father will come down with three hundred, or indeed anything you order, and he will follow out his military education as you direct. You are still in some repute; stroke your chin and advise. Fred* is this instant come in, and scolds me for writing a long letter. "Aye," says I, "but it is to Keith!" "Make it longer; add my love," says her ladyship.

F. C.

* Lady F. Campbell—sometimes elsewhere designated by the familiar epithet of Ferry.

SIR R. M. KEITH TO MR. BRADSHAW.

Vienna, May 1st, 1773.

I AM sorry, *very sorry*, my dear Brad, that the block-head whom I sent over on purpose to execute my vengeance upon *Tatty*,* did his business so clumsily. I had charged him *expressly* to set fire to the house, in the room under Tatty's bedchamber, and to be careful that it *kindled kindly*, and communicated to the *nursery*. I had hopes that even the officious puppy of a Scotch watchman in New-street, would only be able to save Bob himself (whom, for the sake of the sport of angling, I was willing to spare), with a very small remnant of his family. They have all of them got off for this once, with only their rumps a little scorched; but (as the ingenious Caleb Whitefoord has it) *if they do not soon put five letters in a certain place*, they shall hear of me.

I *have* friends, and they have shown themselves so *indeed*, by sending me "The Heroic Epistle to Sir William Chambers." Need I say that I have tasted it with the keenest relish? or that I doat upon Mrs. Brad-shaw's condescension in extending the fame of her *gibbetted lord* to the gates of Vienna? I now offer her a *ribboned* successor to that dangling lord-commis-sioner, whenever Jack Ketch shall have fulfilled *his* duty and *her* wishes. I long to see whether an eight days' suspension amidst the ambient air of Bagshot, may not change the well-known *cream colour* into some darker hue. Your children, whom you now recommend to my counsel, shall then share in my paternal care; and not a Brad of them all shall follow his deceased sire in the page of Woodfall, or heath of Hounslow. But enough of this—next to my Frederick. You gave me a hint of his contrition, which at length vented itself in three

* The amiable lady of Mr. R. Drummond.

tiny pages of penitential diction. These he intrusted to Sir Basil, who presuming, I suppose, that the wind did not set fair for the eastern coasts of Britain, made a *tack* with them in his pocket to *Bath*, from whence I have received them, and with cordial welcome, as an earnest of better days. His lordship Fred tells me, that Harry and Bess, &c., were to pass the holidays with him in mirth, jollity, and gambling. Happy, happy, happy *Gang!* gay, jocund, artless, and above all, *unfeeling*—the very type of innocence primeval.

Shall I own it to you, my Brad? amidst the present *august* and *Imperial* scenes, where I am wrapt in drowsy dignity, I often paint to my imagination the sports which fill your lordship's leisure, and that of my quondam friends and comrades. This very *first of May* now, I suppose you all returned from Coombank; and perhaps at the instant I am penning this poor page, you and Mrs. Brad, with Tatty, Ferry, Bess, &c., attended by *ten Cicisbeos*, and a score of your *well-fed* children, are rolling in company down Greenwich-hill for the honour of old England! Lord! Lord! and here am *I*, a pompous periwig-pated plenipo, with a vengeance to me! Adieu.

MR. BRADSHAW TO SIR R. M. KEITH.

4th May, 1773.

I TAKE for granted, by your Excellency's silence, that you are tired of receiving my dull gazettes; and your Excellency takes for granted that by your silence you will put an end to them. No such matter, *mon cher Chevalier!* till you say in direct terms, *ground your pen*, I will continue to write.

Lord North yesterday opened his plan of regulations for the East India Company, the outline of which is as follows:—That after the next election, the Directors

shall hold their places in the direction for four years. That the qualification of those who are in future to vote for directors, shall be altered from 500*l.* stock held for six months, to 1000*l.*, in the possession of the voter for twelve months before the election. That there shall be a Governor-general, assisted by a Council of five, or seven, with superintending powers over all parts of India; in whom alone shall be vested the making of peace and war; and who are to be authorised to suspend, or remove governors, and all other servants of the Company. That judges shall be appointed by the Crown, for the administration of justice in India; and that the Governor-general in Council shall, for the first time, be named by Parliament, and in future, as the directors are chosen, by the proprietors.

The rest of the regulations relate to prohibition of private trade, monopolies, and exorbitant interest. Lord Clive spoke two hours and twenty-five minutes, as a defence; in which time, he uttered many absurdities, and by no means convinced me of his innocence. He gave his opinion of several regulations, and declared, that he thought none more important than the preventing individuals from becoming suddenly and immoderately rich; that he had been obliged to confine power, while he was in India, in a few hands, or, that instead of six or seven nabobs "*of us*," (that was his expression,) there would have been fifty, which would not have been very agreeable to country gentlemen. What think you of this, my dear Keith? It may be great, but it was very impudent, in my poor opinion, who am only *couleur de crême*. Burgoyne moved for taking the several reports from the secret and select committees into consideration on Monday next; when the nabobs will come under investigation, and I hope some of them will be squeezed. Upon reflection, I am inclined to think all this may be very uninteresting to you; but

you *shall* know whatever passes. We have no orders as yet for disarming; and I shall go on Friday to see the fleet. Upon the return of a messenger from Paris, we shall know more.

5th.

The messenger is returned, and all is peace again. Johnny Parker has got the 20th regiment. I wish your Excellency had it, even if I were by that means prevented from writing to you, by your return to this poor miserable country, to live your life with the *Gang*, instead of the Princes and Princesses with whom you hold your daily fêtes.

Another mail, and no letter! Job was a choleric fellow to me; I will say nothing, but, "*tout Job comme je suis*," I will think of your Excellency as you deserve, and leave your punishment to your own conscience. Adieu.

T. B.

LORD FREDERICK CAMPBELL TO SIR R. M. KEITH.

May 11*th*, 1773.

You have too much spirit, my dear Keith, and have been too long at the Court of Vienna, easily to receive into your confidence an old friend, who has so long neglected your correspondence. Besides, I am become a mere country gentleman, and know as little as an old Tory did formerly, when he had first found his way to St. James's. Yet I think there is a certain good-nature about you which does you more honour than your red ribbon; and which, after having seen about as many letters from me, as there are usually post-boys before a German dispatch of a victory, will soften your heart to its old feelings, so that the pen will run again in its usual Keith style, and I shall deserve to hear from you.

By the bye, what an escape we have had! War and

peace—orders and counter-orders to arms for this fortnight past, have taken their turns again and again. At present, the barometer of this part of the world certainly stands at peace. We have this from authority; the first Lord of the Treasury let this out of a budget the other day in the House of Commons, before his brethren of the Cabinet knew it was assured. They were very angry, as it is said, and have since taken most ample revenge of his lordship, by showing, to a very full House, that he must sometimes submit to be governed.

Yesterday, upon notice given, the administration suffered Burgoyne to lead the House to the consideration of the various reports of the secret and select committees, and to call for examples, by way of punishment, or at least restitution. The motions themselves shall follow, as part of my speech, *alias* letter. In the meantime, I will tell you the whimsical turn those propositions took, and the whimsical situation Lord North contrived to put himself into.

The propositions were formed by a secret committee of the select committee, some three or four; as Burgoyne, Sir William Meredith, Sir John Turner, and Vane; but were made public long enough before they were moved. His lordship, as I am told, was well apprised of them, and it was known he meant to support them. His Solicitor-general, equally apprised of them, resolved to give them the strongest opposition; which he did in a long elaborate able speech, full of bitterness against Burgoyne, to whom he was a second Junius. The House was, to a man, almost as determined to abandon these motions, as they had been eager to adopt them. They were allowed by all to be too general, too undefined, and too equivocal to be voted; Burgoyne having particularly chosen the word *State*, as applicable either to the public as sovereigns, or to the Company,

and professing not to decide the question of territorial right, one way or other.

Lord North gave up the propositions, but defended the substance of them. Dyson said he could not assent to them as proposed, and it was universally agreed they could not be proceeded upon. In this state the House remained, *two or three hours* debating in what manner they should be postponed; for the Solicitor-general had very injudiciously moved for the order of the day, which seemed to carry with it an intention to put an end to any further proceeding whatever, by way of example. Had he only moved to adjourn the debate immediately, the question would have been carried without a moment's hesitation. From dry order, the House got round again to the rapacity, oppressions, robberies, and murders of our English nabobs. The Attorney-general, with all the eagerness of a *Rigby*, and, as if supported by all the warmth and weight of a *Bedford*, rose up, and in a very able, masterly performance, caught the instant, and at once, with redoubled heat, established the motions!

Dyson did now find out that it was possible to assent; Lord North did now find out there was a part of the administration that must be blooded; and he submitted to take their direction, and govern the House more effectually by their passions than ever he had done by his ministerial influence. Nothing that you have read of concerning the effects of ancient oratory, could have given you a stronger idea of the transitions that are to be made in the opinions of a popular assembly, than this scene, had you been present. Yet, it was not oratory, (though that had its weight,) but passions and political feelings that made the fluctuations.

What has been done, is right in substance. But the manner of it will show who are to govern in the Cabinet; and that what was omitted to be done for

years past through indolence, must now be hastily pursued with violence ;* for to that the House of Commons often have, and will now oftener come, when they make themselves judges.

The *Gang* are not, as you wished them, tied neck and heels, or hanging upon gibbets, but all well.

Yours, most truly,
F. C.

P.S.—PROPOSITIONS OF THE SECRET COMMITTEE UPON INDIAN AFFAIRS.

1. That all acquisitions made under the influence of military force, or by treaty with foreign powers, do of right belong to the *State*.
2. That to appropriate acquisitions so made, to the private emolument of persons intrusted with any civil, or military power of the State, is illegal.
3. That very great sums of money, and other valuable property, have been acquired in Bengal, from Princes, and others of that country, by persons intrusted with the military and civil power of the State; which sums of money and valuable property have been appropriated to the private use of such persons.

SIR R. M. KEITH TO MR. BRADSHAW.

Vienna, May 8th, 1773.

Sir Basil, the great governor, Sir Basil, has done, (according to the "Bath Journal,") or is about to do—a deed! He is a very honest fellow, (though a *rich man*,) and I expect him to favour the world with half a dozen future admirals and plenipos, bearing the stamp of all the beauty of their sire. If they either have

* It is impossible not to be struck with the applicability of this remark to many important constitutional changes of more modern times.

money, or care for it; if they are tamely prudent, and wordly wise; or love logic better than nonsense, they are no progeny of Basil's, and I disinherit them by anticipation. Do you, my dear Brad, hold a council of war upon my lady sister, and give me that lawful right to love her cordially, which, from several good anecdotes I know, I am already so much inclined to do. If the *Gang* grant their testimony to her merit, I will not hesitate a moment to settle two or three thousand pounds a year of jointure upon her ladyship, out of my share of the next kingdom which any of the powers of Europe shall think proper to cut into shreds, and parcel out among their friends and adherents, for the improvement of the law of nations. You know every butcher's dog has a slice out of the offal, and what are we *plenipos* but curs of the same kidney?

She, poor woman! has probably taken it into her head, that she is soon to be sister-in-law to one of the greatest, nay, wisest ministers in Christendom. What a falling off, when she comes to hear the truth of the matter, and of the man,—from Bess or Tatty, or some such *viper* or *virago!* Tell them, my Brad, and tell my lady too, that none of them know me; and that if it had not been my misfortune to keep their company, I had it in me to have been as painstaking and profound a politician as Count Haslang, or any other minister of their acquaintance. Nay, you may add for her comfort, that, if my banishment is prolonged for ten or a dozen years, I shall bring home to England, as great a share of wisdom, and of *wig*, as ever graced a son of Hugo Grotius. But enough of this. Her ladyship has naturally turned her thoughts more towards the *negroes* of Jamaica, than the *negotiators* of Europe.

N.B.—In the next *assiento* treaty with Spain, I will have an eye to Basil and his blacks!

MR. BRADSHAW TO SIR R. M. KEITH.

May 14*th*, 1773.

Now to your letter; but my dear Keith, I am but a frail piece of mortality; I am plagued with nerves and headaches, and I feel that I have not half the mirth and good-humour that I used to possess. If, therefore, you will not accept of a dull matter of fact letter, now and then, tell me so. I will be silent if you desire me; but I *will* love you, in spite of your teeth.

May 18*th*.

Whiskers,* as well as *Monsieur*, is a little more lively than becomes his natural gravity, or our greatness. But I beg your pardon for touching upon such topics; and drawing in my horns, and shutting up my political budget, I shall only *touch*, and *go*. I am this moment returned with Rigby from a visit to the Attorney-general.† I don't know whether you know much of him; in my opinion he is the first of statesmen. I am sure he is the first man of business I know. He is whetting his tusks for the nabobs. Burgoyne moves that Lord Clive has received 260,000*l*., and a Jaghire, to the prejudice of the Company; and that he, by so doing, is guilty of a misdemeanour. It will be followed by a resolution for his restoring that trifling sum.

Adieu my dear Keith.

MR. BRADSHAW TO SIR R. M. KEITH.

Tuesday, 25*th May*, 1773.

Now hang me like a dog if I don't write you an account of the inquiry into the conduct of Lord Clive, notwithstanding your impertinent sarcasm about *Indian politics* and *roasted Directors*. Nay, don't turn up your plenipotentian snub-nose. You may throw my letter

* The King of Spain. † Thurlow.

into the fire, or send it, wrapped about half-a-dozen lozenges, to the Princess Lamberg; but the Acts of the Commons of Great Britain *shall* travel to the walls of Vienna by some other conveyance besides Woodfall's *Fly* and J. Miller's *Tim-whisky!*

On Friday last, after examining a witness to some of the facts relative to Lord Clive, which were stated in the report of the Select Committee, Colonel Burgoyne moved, "That it appears to this House, that Robert Lord Clive, about the time of deposing Surajah Doulah, Nabob of Bengal, and establishing Meer Jaffier on the Musnud, did, through the influence of the powers with which he was intrusted, as a member of the Select Committee and Commander-in-Chief of the British forces, obtain and possess himself of two lacks and 30,000 rupees, as member of the Select Committee, of a like sum as Commander-in-Chief, a further sum of sixteen lacks or more, under the denomination of private donation; which sums, amounting together to 20 lacks, 30,000 rupees, were of the value of 234,000*l.*; and that in so doing, Robert Lord Clive abused the powers with which he was intrusted, to the evil example of the servants of the Company."

Mr. Stanley moved to divide the question, and that the censure, from the figures 234,000*l.* should be left out. After debate this was agreed to, Lord North being for it. Rose Fuller then moved to amend the first question, then to be put, by leaving out, "*through the influence of the powers with which he was intrusted,*" which occasioned a very long and warm debate till past five o'clock on Saturday morning, when, upon a division, 155 were for Fuller's amendment, and 95 against leaving out the above words, in which last number was your humble servant, who was beat, with his general, Lord North; but, upon my word, I voted from conscience and feeling. I would not have taken a shilling from

Lord Clive, but I would have established the principle; and avowed, that in consideration of Lord Clive's great and eminent services, the House would proceed no farther in his case. It was no ministerial question. Lord North did not call for the support of any one friend. He was opposed by his warmest partisans, and supported by many of his keenest enemies.

Upon the whole I felt a pleasure in the good-humour of John Bull. He will speak and write daggers, and hang and cut off heads without mercy in the newspapers; but when a culprit has submitted, and John has him absolutely in his power, he will not hurt a hair of his head. Having done justice to John's temper, I must add, that I see very serious consequences from the effects of it upon the present occasion. Without pursuing a very strict and serious inquiry into the causes of the present wretched and bankrupt condition of the Company, and making an example of some of those, at least, whose rapine and villainy have brought it to the brink of destruction, all laws will be a joke, and regulations will be waste paper. It is intended to go on with the inquiry, and to punish some of the *untitled* plunderers of the East by making them *disgorge*. Now I own, though these minor plunderers have not Lord Clive's services to plead, yet when they say in their defence, that what they received by holding a pistol to some distressed nabob's head, and making him give them a *voluntary present* (for they are all stated as voluntary), they were encouraged to take from the example of Lord Clive, and the honours which were afterwards conferred upon him (for the scene of rapine has been, since the revolution, in favour of Meer Jaffier) —and when they plead the precedent of the House, established last Saturday, and the arguments used by respectable members in support of such presents, I own I shall bring myself with difficulty to squeeze even a

Sykes. As my mind goes to equal and impartial justice, though I have been Secretary to the Treasury, and am still a member of Parliament, I shall in all probability vote with Lord North, but I shall do it with remorse. If the House had established the offence in the case of Lord Clive, I should have been satisfied, and his services would then have been a sufficient ground for pardoning what had been declared a fault.

Lord Clive said but little in his defence. He threw himself upon the candour of the House; and just before he retired, with tears in his eyes, he implored the House to save his reputation and take his fortune. In short, he acted his part so well, that several members burst into tears; and I am only surprised that the King was not addressed to bestow some additional honour upon him. The principal article of merit insisted upon by his friends was, that when he entered Muxadabat with Meer Jaffier, at the time of the revolution, he did not plunder that city, by which he might have obtained to himself some millions. He had, in that particular, exactly the same degree of merit which King William had, by not plundering London when he took possession of Whitehall with his Dutch Guards. Lord Clive entered Muxadabat in procession, with the new Nabob, his friend, whose city it was, and to whom belonged the treasures it contained; and I do not believe Jonathan Wild would have acted otherwise.

Barré drew an excellent picture of the increase of nabobs, and of their power, as well as of the additional strength which ministers would derive in Parliament from men who must fly to government for protection. He told the country gentlemen that their consequence would be at an end; that the Minister would not even think it worth his while to solicit their attendance. It would not be necessary for him to summon the *national* troops, as he would be able to beat opposition with his *Sepoys*.

Thus have I tried your patience, my dear Keith, with a long and dull account of what I think an important matter. I should think it relates to a business upon which the eyes of all Europe have been turned (to use Lord Hardwicke's favourite expression), and therefore I was resolved you should know the proceedings in detail. Now to your letter of the 8th of May, which arrived to indemnify me from the disagreeable night which has been the subject of this long dispatch. You write better without a subject than with one, and I had rather have one line of *Keith, unadulterated,* than a volume of the acts of all the Kings of Europe, or the events of all their kingdoms. I therefore desire that all the bricks you send me may be made *without straw.*

Your generosity to Lady Keith does you great honour; I am in love with her already for the whole of her conduct to Basil, and he has shown me a letter from her, which has added fuel to my flame. I long to see her. Bess knows her perfectly well, and is warm in her commendations. When she appears among us, I will promise you a letter from the whole *Gang* upon her subject, and those who cannot write shall make their mark.

Nothing decisive from abroad. Our fleet rides proudly at Spithead, and, to my joy, the King will certainly go and see it after the birth-day.

28th May.

Monsieur has really disarmed, and we are going to pay off our supernumerary men. In the meantime, twenty sail of the line are assembling at Portsmouth, to be formed into three squadrons, that the red, blue, and white flags may fly when his Majesty sees his fleet, which he will certainly do about the 20th of next month; and the summer fleet will sail while he is at Portsmouth.

All the *Gang* are in perfect health. I have neither

matters of fact nor nonsense to bestow upon you, and with more than common stupidity, and with my usual truth and affection, I declare myself,

Ever yours,

T. B.

Rigby gave Basil a dinner yesterday. He sneaked away early to his *Warren!*

SIR R. M. KEITH TO MR. BRADSHAW.

Vienna, May 13th, 1773.

I OFTEN find you arrogating to yourself the title of an *exceedingly dull fellow,* and I see you grow proud upon that species of super-eminence; but I would have you know that his Majesty's diplomatical servants deal as largely in that way as any set of men whatever. For instance, I myself at this moment have the intimate feeling of a dulness which would do honour to any cheesemonger in Thames Street, and am heartily disposed to pour a certain quantity of that dulness through the *funnel* of this letter. It shall be the *melted lead* of matter-of-fact, which is known to be particularly ponderous and soporific.

First, then, my new *hotel* has precisely thirty-four rooms, besides passages and entries. These rooms I intend to furnish handsomely, with my two dozen and a half of chairs (ten of which you know have damask bottoms), one settee, six *tabourets,* and three card-tables! Well, sir! I have stabling for sixteen stout saddle and coach horses, and stout ones they shall be! and three of them (my stalls) are already actually filled with *live* horses, my own property. I have but three kitchens, and two ice-houses, and yet I defy any man to guess *which* is *which,* for ice or fire *have I none!* My officers of the household, steward, butler, confectioner, cooks, and four valets-de-chambre, are men at the top of the

fashion, and dress according to the *four* seasons of the year. My running and walking varlets wear, in their red and yellow doublets of *Denmark*, a variety of wretchedness. I have heard say that these gentlemen and serving-men of my retinue *do dine*, but where, or how, is no *matter of mine*. Thus you see how a foreign minister is undone, by the three deadly drains of furniture, equipage, and hospitality.

May 14th.

I am in possession of your letter of the 30th April, and laugh at your French ambassador's *bravados*, knowing as I do that *you* have been at Mistley to settle the national politics with Rigby, and that your lordship will soon wield the Trident of Neptune, on board Barrington's ship.

If Monsieur de Guisnes * is the man of parts I take him for, and has discovered the extent and weight of your talents as a financier, an admiral, a leader of the Commons, *et un homme à bonnes fortunes*, he will serve his Court ill if he does not *Barillon* Bradshaw,† and transmit your name in *golden* letters to grace the page of some future historian.

You ask me if I ever ride? Yes, your lordship, I do ride, and gallop too, without touching the mane. One of my three horses has a switch tail, and shall carry a sportsman with any horse in your palace of Hampton Court. He is of the right Transylvanian breed, and his sire was killed under Count Khevenhuller, at the battle of Krotzka. There, my lord, there 's a clear answer to your question.

Sir Basil is by this time deep in the Hybla of the honeymoon, and I cannot help envying him. I have already given you my sentiments upon this sub-

* The French ambassador.

† Alluding to the briberies at the Court of Charles II.

ject; and if you will be good enough to read in some polite circle the first part of this letter, *descriptive of my housekeeping,* it is not impossible that some amiable creature might be tempted to wish herself at the head of it.

As to politics, I don't trouble my head much with the *quips modest* and *retorts courteous* which are passing between you and your neighbours the Gauls; these I leave to greater men, and my eye of wisdom is turned towards the *Seven Towers of Byzantium;* I mistake much if you, my lord, do not perceive the French *cloven foot,* in the Turkish *manifest-toe* we transmit to your Excellencies by this post.

May 15th.

You shall now have (and indeed it is high time), a little bit of common sense and sound reason tacked to all the preceding fustian and balderdash. You do me honour by consulting me about your boys, and I look with pleasure to the hope of being able to repay by the kindest attention towards them, some part of the debt of friendship which I owe to their father and mother.

The question with regard to the eldest is not how to enable him to create a fortune, but to give him (which is ten times harder to do) the means of enjoying opulence with utility and dignity. I need not remark to you, that a solid and well-founded education is (after health) the first of all blessings in every station; but I am fully of opinion that a man whose fortune is already made, stands more in need of a fund of knowledge, and *self-occupation,* than one of any other class whatever. Open therefore the door of *every science* and accomplishment to your eldest boy, and when you see him step in with pleasure, then make his residence as comfortable and beneficial to him as you can. Should his genius lead him to any grave study which demands a length of application, I do not think you ought to check him in

the pursuit, though you may not intend he should follow the profession hereafter. The habit of application is in *itself* a treasure, no matter of how little advantage to fortune that branch of knowledge may be which is the object of it. Such a habit may save your boy from the dreadful danger of the times, that of coming into the world too early, with, alas! no other time-killer than *cards* and—*Newmarket*.

I myself am certainly one of the happiest of mortals, and I thank God, I feel it. But if I were to be asked which is my surest fence against the frowns of fortune, or the miseries of *ennui*, which so often follow her smiles, I should answer without hesitation, *my love of books*, and that love you must early instil into your son and heir. Tell me what he likes best to do when nobody controls him, and hint to me the foibles which you have been able to discover in his temper and character, and you shall have my best advice upon everything. A flashy bit of a letter like this, with a few wise sentences and nostrums, will neither fulfil your intentions nor mine; but I will willingly follow the matter out, step by step, which is the only way of doing education *business*. I like the private tutor, and the company of Bob's son exceedingly, *for the present;* and here we will leave him, and proceed to Master Barrington. I think that same young dog, with sharp and brilliant parts, must, and shall be, a lawyer; because that profession is in Britain, and in Britain only, the profession of an honest man, as well as the road to honour and affluence. Let him *Harrow* on at his school for some time longer, but it will not be amiss, in your conversation with him, to endeavour to fix his eye and his ambition early upon the Lord Chancellor's wig. It is fair in a father to give to the *sapling* that gentle twist which bends him towards the paternal wishes for his good.

All degrees of force carried beyond that point, and in

opposition to natural talents and disposition, are not only cruel, but *absurd*. We will take care of the other brats as they grow up, and as I think I have proved to you that I am fond of boys, I am proud to tell you, Mr. Brad, that you are not the only father who has promised to leave me a legacy of all his children. More than one honest man has made me the honourable offer, and, hang me like a dog, if I don't accept of such legacies whenever they may fall to me, with a tender gratitude, and the sincerest intention of acting up to the duties which they may bring along with them.

Heigh-ho! I have talked reason now for upwards of ten minutes, which is an exercise of the mind I have been little accustomed to, and it jades me prodigiously! My daily pastimes are gallantry and politics; and it is no hard matter to sputter about one or other of those topics for a dozen hours, without the smallest mental fatigue. Every fool is fluent with the ladies; and as to the *jargon* of politics, I verily believe that if you were to sit down at my bed-side at three o'clock in the morning, and put a question to me in regard to the *Pragmatic Sanction*, I should be able to run on (like an alarum clock), for an hour or two, with the rumbling nonsense which belongs to the subject, and never lose a single instant of my seven hours' sleep. I warrant now, my Brad, you could (from a parity of practice) fit out a royal fleet in your first slumber!

So—you have been down with Rigby, have ye? and you have had the mutton hash, and the Harwich soles, and the neck of venison, and the asparagus, and green peas, with a little *Hock and Spa*, and half a glass of champagne, and a pint of the old claret? Oh! Brad, Brad, if you did but know what a fortunate puppy you are, and what a mint of money the Danish knight would have given to share those blessings which (ten to one) you received with a lordly apathy and

indifference! I don't know how it is, Brad, but I am not sure if you possess the talent of *enjoyment*. I sometimes doubt whether Providence has granted you that best balsam of life. I truly have not had many of the hey-day enjoyments within my reach, but such as have fallen to me I have feasted upon with all the poignancy of appetite. You know that I do not mean aldermanic guzzling of meat and drink; but (as my learned friend Macpherson has it) the feast of souls. I shall grow monstrously hungry for Rigby cookery in that style in a year or two; for, to say the truth, I cannot bring my stomach to relish my present *soupe maigre* and water-gruel diet. When you meet with the matadores of the Ministry, such as Lords North, Suffolk, Dartmouth, &c., you may assure them that, as men who have helped to make my fortune, I respect and honour them; and as men whose friendship makes fortune worth the having, I love them, and wish to live with them. Farewell, my dear Brad. *La belle des belles se porte divinement bien.*

R. M. K.

SIR R. M. KEITH TO MR. BRADSHAW.

Vienna, May 22nd, 1773.

My dear Lord Commissioner, let me return you the thanks of all the Protestant Princes of the empire, for the speedy and manly exertion of your naval force, which you have so lately exhibited at Spithead. It does not become a pitiful plenipo to guess upon whom you intended to bestow the blows you were so active in preparing; but the alacrity with which your lordship stripped into your buff may have nearly the same effect upon your *unknown antagonists*, as a sound beating would have had. The generality of spectators heartily wish that it may; and we peace-mongers (helping your lordship on with your clothes again) cannot help

applauding the vigour of the measure, and the moderation which put a stop to it. Thus, my boy, you may now drink a pot with your comrades; and say, that though you love quiet and good fellowship, yet you scorn to refuse to take a *bout* for *love* with any choleric *He* in Christendom.

You are not in earnest, Master Brad, when you talk of curtailing your gazette about St. Stephen's and Leadenhall Street, and the giants of Guildhall. I *must* and *will* know every laudable or laughable anecdote which occurs within the walls of the metropolis and its suburbs; else I will let the Turks take Girgeoff—Ali-beg, Grand Cairo,—and the Russians the whole Archipelago,—without writing a word of the matter. I know you are a great Admiral, friend Bradshaw, but doubt whether your talents as a politician have led you to consider of what importance it is to the welfare of Europe that his Majesty's ministers in foreign parts should be kept in good humour.

Suppose now, (for I love examples), suppose now, I say, that you let a fortnight pass without letting me know what became of Lady Craven. At the end of it I am naturally in a d—d bad humour; and behold, I receive a letter from his Majesty's Consul at Aleppo, telling me that Kara Osmin Oglu threatens to return, and lay the city of Smyrna in ruins. In justice (do you see?) I ought to write to certain parties to avert the danger, and protect the property of his Majesty's subjects; but being angry with you, and peevish with mankind, I say to myself, "D— Kara Osmin Oglu, with Aleppo and Smyrna into the bargain. Since men in power treat me so scurvily in matters of *crim. con.*, I wish I may be hanged if I trouble myself about their paltry matters of commerce." Thus you see that the Turkey Company may be ruined by your silence, and it is not impossible that it might make a great odds

too in the affairs of Sweden. Every thing in this world is subject to *concatenation*; excepting only my letters, which have not two links that are fellows.

What the deuce will you men of the Ministry do with that same petition from Leadenhall-street, in which you are *humbly* given to understand that you are a parcel of *arbitrary* plunderers? Why, to be sure, the rigid stoicism of Calcutta gives the Directors a right to split a hair in points of property; and it is plain that they will let none but their own nabobs pigeon them with impunity. Lord Clive's idea about the three heads upon Temple-bar is lively and good-humoured at least; but I long to see, by the rest of his defence, how far he is entitled to be a joker upon the subject.

So you think, I warrant you, that I don't know that you have been down at Portsmouth with a *Quint Major* of ministers. Let me know, not how your ships worked, nor their draught of water, but in what spirits these matadores were upon their jaunt, and what share of claret they took in his Majesty's floating summer-houses. If it was half as hot with you, as we have it here, their Excellencies and your lordship must needs have been *bloody thirsty*. Adieu, my Brad.

Yours,

R. M. K.

SIR R. M. KEITH TO MR. BRADSHAW.

Vienna, May 28th, 1773.

You are now enlisted for life, my dear Brad, and *pleased* or *peevish* you must scribble to me in *sæcula seculorum*. But I positively bar all nerves and head-aches; for God and Nature gave you both a sound constitution and good spirits; and it does not follow that because you are a great man you must be a vapourish valetudinarian. Shall I never see power, health, and

genuine pleasantry joined in the composition of one happy mortal? Hang Lord Suffolk, and Rigby, and Rochford, and half-a-dozen more of my chosen men, who be-devil half their enjoyments and mine, with gout and gravel, and all those *ills which ministerial flesh is heir to*. Here am I now, possessed (I will be bold to say), of as complete a set of friends as any man in England, yet I should be hard put to it to warrant any one of them sound in wind and limb, except my limber Lord Register,* and the gallant Corporal Harry.† By the bye, Frederick boasts much of his punctuality, for he talks of three letters, and I have had but two, and scraggy ones they were. I am sorry for poor Wedderburn,‡ and I wish the Nabob of Broach at Old Nick, with his feats and his forces. It is a cursed thing to go to be roasted for three or four years in quest of gold or glory, and then to be forked off with an ounce of lead through one's pericranium. The East India business, between Ministry and Direction, is carried on in the lady-like spirit of altercation. The plot thickens beyond my penetration. You ministers want to give them both law and money; the mixture is new to them, and turns their stomachs. But can they contrive to swallow the gilding without the pill? Pray inform me; and whether you continue to prescribe an emetic to the warriors of Plassy? So your worship is pleased to hint that the perfidious *foe* is again returned to his dog tricks, and that honest John Bull must not desist from watching him. Be it so; but certain it is that John Bull is a very well-conditioned responsible housekeeper; and if he must set his family afloat again, I hope the first and best man of that family § will indulge himself with a sight of the show.

Yours, R. M. K.

* Lord F. Campbell.
† H. Drummond, Esq.
‡ Col. Wedderburn, killed in India.
§ The King.

SIR R. M. KEITH TO MR. BRADSHAW.

Vienna, June 5th, 1773.

I AM now pretty well convinced that some ingenious postmaster instructs his daughter in the art of letter-writing, by examples drawn from our correspondence. What is to be done, my dear Brad? I have lost my money at whist, to Count Paar, the Imperial Postmaster-general; I have made three bows extraordinary, and given two pinches of snuff to the Prince de la Tour Taxis, the Postmaster of the Holy Roman Empire. It is not in the power of man to form a more tender connexion with those princely personages. Yet are our letters purloined in part; for I can no longer doubt of the loss of my manuscript of April 17th, nor stifle my anxiety on your silence of last post. Pray make all safe on your side of the water, by redoubling your kindness and attention to Lord Despenser and Harry Thynne; and I shall be bound that if my valuable friend, Mr. Todd, takes a peep into our papers (as peep he will sometimes), he has too much taste, as well as liberality of sentiment, to suppress a syllable of our cordial confabulations.

I have had your scrawl of May 18th, informing me of the marriage of Ensign Horneck,* to which I give my full consent, looking upon it as a happy omen for the Knight of Denmark. Don't you recollect that Master Horneck was Sir Basil's squire, and that Sir Basil was Sir Robert's proxy at the installation? Mark, now, what has befallen these two gentlemen, and judge whether they are not again walking in procession before him, to guide his steps in the mysterious path of matrimony. Upon the promise you have given me to assemble a *committee* (*secret* or *select*, as you please), I have

* To the beautiful Miss Keppel, daughter to Lord Albemarle.

suspended all my matrimonial negociations in Transylvania, Croatia, Podolia, and Volhynia, as well as in Moldavia and Wallachia. The news of my purpose had reached those provinces, and many a fair face was washed upon the occasion, which no other waters than those of *baptism* had ever touched before! I may, perhaps, from an exertion of patriotic spirit, resist for a month or two more the overtures of these magnates and their misses; but I cannot, in conscience, stay the progress of population in so many provinces, or keep in suspense such crowds of females, for my single person.

I see that Burgoyne has moved for a large slice of the Jaghire; but pray, can you gentlemen of St. Stephen's enforce a restitution without the form of *legal process?* I do not ask this question from any retrospection towards self; for, though I have touched a pretty round sum of public money and (heaven knows) made but a scanty return for it, yet I boldly defy all the Burgoynes in Britain, to force me to refund a shilling, as I have the happiness to find myself not worth a groat. A few nick-nacks and silver spoons, and so-forth; but there 's no buckler against violence and envy like pristine poverty, and that buckler I do wear.

N.B.—I do great justice to Burgoyne's honour and spirit.

O dear! O dear! undone, ruined, past redemption! Who d' ye think is come to Vienna? Why the Duchess of Gordon; and I must feast, and gallant, and present her grace—oh! poor Plenipo! The pen drops from my hand, I can no more.

R. M. K.

[*Private.*]

LORD SUFFOLK TO SIR R. M. KEITH.

Duke-street, Westminster, June 11th, 1773.

It will be a long time, my dear Keith, before this letter reaches you; but written it must be. A messenger,

whatever route he takes, can never be sent by me to the place of your residence, while I have a hand to write, without bearing some characters of it; were it only to tell you what you know already, that I honour and esteem you, and am anxious for your prosperity in all respects.

In good truth our domestic scenes don't afford much matter, or such, at least, as I choose to work up; for parliamentary business is sadly out of season in the month of June; and if the occupations of our senators were divine in nature, I should think them diabolical at this time of the year. I hope, however, all our trouble of this sort will be ended in the course of next week, and the ensuing is devoted to the sea. The King makes an expedition to Portsmouth to view his fleet, and visit the great magazine of the first naval power in the world. Suppress if you can, my dear Keith, the emotions we shall feel at this display of national strength and proud pre-eminence, our royal master being an eye-witness of it.

——— tua Nautæ
Numina sola colant; tibi serviat ultima Thule;
Teque sibi generum Tethys emat omnibus undis!

Vienna is a long way off, and yet I am much mistaken if the fire won't catch, and your imagination transport you on board the *Barfleur!* At all events, drop a blessing on the scheme, and pray that it may be the introduction to other measures of a like nature, which may make our Sovereign better known to his subjects, and build a throne for him in the hearts of his people.

The Governor of Jamaica is setting out to take leave of the old gentleman in Scotland, who, I have the satisfaction to hear, continues perfectly well. So is Bagot, so is Harley, so are the Drummonds. Bradshaw, I believe, speaks for himself. But of my own health I can say little. I am just recovering a cruel

attack of the gout, and know not how to flatter myself that I shall long be fit for anything.

That you may long, very long, enjoy every blessing that falls to the lot of poor human nature, is the sincere wish of

Your affectionate, faithful, and
Obedient servant,
SUFFOLK.

SIR R. M. KEITH TO MR. BRADSHAW.

Vienna, June 10th, 1773.

THANKS to you, my friend, for your substantial favour of May 25th, which has wiped away from before my weak optics that mist of uncertainty which hung over India and her nabobs. I now see—but what signifies it what I see? Your lordship's eagle eye has marked and seized the prey; and having helped to enrich old England by the restitution of plundered millions, I take it for granted that you have dismissed the Westminster boys for six months at least, and are now preparing to undertake your annual *fidgetation* round all the bathing and water-drinking places in the kingdom. Well! but I hope you will take another cup of Britannia's brine at Spithead (and in the *suite* of the monarch too), before you proceed upon your tour. Lord, what a fine sight! I have a notion that a King of England, upon the quarter-deck of a first-rate, and surrounded by a score of other capital ships, may feel a sort of self-importance and satisfaction, little short of that which I remarked in the countenance of the *late* King of Poland, when he saw ten camels, fifty horses, and fourscore Italians, assembled upon the stage of his Opera House at Dresden. To be sure, both are grand things; but every man has his taste, and mine at present is all tar and turpentine. Huzza! huzza! Sir Charles Saunders against Mademoiselle Heinzel, all the world to nothing!

June 12th.

I told you in my last that I had just got a Duchess *astride* upon my shoulders, who intended to amble me about the streets of Vienna for one painful fortnight at least. Now, in so saying, I did a manifest injustice to her Grace of Gordon, who is certainly one of the *best conditioned,* as well as plainest, of God's Duchesses. She has behaved like a Cherubim for this week past. She has preserved an incognito becoming her face and the fashion. She has seen all my shows (including the bear-garden), with a good-humoured curiosity. She has ate my mutton with a hearty stomach, and said civil things of Sir Robert and his cook, and to sum up all in one word, she leaves Austria on Tuesday next. I swear I am almost sorry for it, for I would sell my coat to serve a woman who is always pleased, always ready, and whose warmth of heart has lighted up a constant glow on her countenance.

I am afraid that Frederick and Dick Cox are again troubled with their old taciturnity. They look upon my letters as "pills to purge melancholy." I wish they were as effectual in removing laziness! Tatty has given me totally up, and yet she thinks of going to Heaven! I am sure of one thing, she must and *shall* make a good long stop in Purgatory; and there her punishment shall be to teach *dull children* to write and spell; and their *copies* shall be taken from those very letters of mine, with which she has made matches in this wicked world. I am undoubtedly a very saint in point of temper, for there are at this moment thirteen or fourteen men and women of your acquaintance in my black book for their neglect of every duty of friendship; and though I could send them all to Tyburn in a moment of wrath, yet I don't know how it is, in the very next, I take them to my bosom and fondle and cherish them as if (like drowned bodies) I could renew

their heat and circulation by contact with mine. In other words I am a very silly fellow, and a dupe to you all; and if ever I have a son, I will breed him to be cold-hearted and callous *upon principle.*

SIR R. M. KEITH TO MR. BRADSHAW.

Vienna, June 26th, 1773.

I HEREBY declare my hearty wish that there were not a newspaper in England! for though I am thoroughly convinced of the falsity, as well as the absurdity of their political intelligence; yet, when all my trusty *chums* are pleased to take a *nap* for a *month together,* these cursed newspapers acquire a slight degree of credit in my imagination, which puzzles and plagues me. Your lordship has lived too long in courts and levées not to know that even a barefaced lie stands upon its legs till contradicted; and, if it travels a thousand miles, it has a chance of being taken for Holy Writ. I have had no less than *five* new ministries last week from the Whitehall and St. James's "Evening Post," and notwithstanding that there is not a shadow of *verisimility* (this is a handsome new word for you!) in either of them, yet we Austrians may be forgiven, if we at last open our throats to swallow some of that nonsense so repeatedly thrust within them. You may laugh at me as you please; but if it is ever your fate to be transported (as I trust in the justice of the law of England that it will), I'll lay my life that after a single year's residence in South Carolina,* you will believe a newspaper implicitly, if it should peremptorily inform you, that Tom Grosvenor is made a Rear-admiral, and Dick Cox, Lord Chancellor of England.

Tell me honestly! Do you think I shall ever dwindle

* The *then* Botany Bay of Great Britain.

into that sort of licensed gazetteer, who furnishes a sixpenny touch of foreign politics once a week for the information of his Majesty's *minor* servants? Hang me like a dog if I would not rather carry mud to the brick-makers in Marylebone-fields; and if ever you perceive that curse coming upon me, pray be frank enough to hint it to me, that I may run away from my paltry pen and ink, and take to the *road*, as other honest gentlemen of *my cloth* have done before me.

I saw with infinite satisfaction, in one of my news-papers, your lordship's speech in the Cabinet council, *for*—and *against*, the propriety of a late naval armament, and I own I never saw anything more forcible and conclusive. Your lordship *can* speak—and all the world knows it. Would that you could *write* with equal fluency! Against common sense, as well as common justice, I nevertheless, am yours,

R. M. K.

SIR R. M. KEITH TO MR. BRADSHAW.

Vienna, July 10th, 1773.

I HAVE, for this hour past, steeped my pen in milk and honey, in order to wash away the gall which naturally flowed to its nib. I have said to myself, that after living so much in the world, and so long, as an inferior limb of the ministry, it would be absurd in me to complain or fret at the suspension of those gratuitous favours, which a person in high office had for some time past been pleased to confer upon me. In short, I have so far subdued the uncourtly frankness of my natural temper, as to be able to ask your lordship with all the meekness of a pliable politician, when it may be permitted me to hope for the sequel of that instructive correspondence which you had the goodness to promise me in your last *flying favour* of the 1st of June?

I can partly guess at the nature of those weighty

occupations which have engrossed a considerable share of the intermediate time. But I cannot suppose that a man of your activity and experience in maritime affairs, should be so far taken up by the equipment of a small squadron of twenty ships, and the arrangement of three days' etiquette, as not to have found in a whole month, one moment to throw out a signal of affection to a longing friend in a distant and dangerous offing. I leave it to your conscience to decide, whether my expectation upon that head, had done too much honour to your naval abilities, or to your feelings as a friend; for I humbly conceive that in one or other of these qualities your lordship has fallen short of my partial conception.

I shall learn from Messieurs Miller and Baldwin, the detail of your brilliant operations at Spithead, but shall be happy to hear from you that they succeeded completely to the satisfaction of the Sovereign of the Ocean, and the hearts of oak, his sailing servants. I wish that half a dozen Bourbons had been present at the show, which would hardly have suffered by comparison with the Dauphiness' entry into Paris. But enough of sea affairs; we landsmen are apt to talk nonsense when we talk upon them. Bess and Harry I hear were with you. Did they mount upon the main-yard of a man-of-war to huzza their loyalty? I hope they did; and I wish you had carried down Dick Cox and Lord Fred along with you, and *keel-hauled* them both for their cruelty to me! It might have cured their laziness, which I fear no remedy of mine can accomplish.

Sir Basil is now turned off; let me know how he behaved at the matrimonial tree. If any man could be trusted to tell the truth upon matrimonial affairs, I should in a month or two hence ask his counsel upon the gain and loss of that sort of venture. But I have remarked, from my infancy, that married persons, (like

Popish nuns) take a pleasure in inveigling the young and unwary to put on the very fetters which perhaps gall *them* in the tenderest part. It must always, I fear, be a leap in the dark, and then—let the hardest fend off. Adieu, dear Brad. Yours,

R. M. K.

LORD FREDERICK CAMPBELL TO SIR R. M. KEITH.

Coombank, July 11th, 1773.

Go on, my dear Keith—abuse me behind my back, to my face, how you please: I forgive you all; your mind will work itself clear at last, and I shall turn out injured innocence. You allow me no merit for all the gazettes by authority communicated by a certain great man, high in office; nor for the permission I have given to that great man to send you all the private anecdotes of the Court. You forget that your old friend who lived at the corner of No-street, is one of his Majesty's most honourable privy council; and who, though he knows the hinge upon which everything great turns, dares not directly communicate the secret, even to Majesty's representative at Vienna. Well, but did you really attribute all the intelligence you have received under the signature of T— B— to a poor simple Lord of the Admiralty? God help you! I am afraid his Majesty's affairs will go on in a strange way under such a minister. However, though you do not deserve it, for old acquaintance sake I shall continue to suffer Brad, week after week, to send you an account of all public transactions, and whenever the weight of public business will allow me, I shall myself refresh you with a little of what is going on in private.

While his Majesty was reviewing his fleet, feeling himself really a King, and making all Europe see that he really knew what he was about, I was permitted,

though very well acquainted with naval affairs, to retire to the Isle of Wight; where, with a great many Amhersts, a great many Drummonds, fine weather, and a beautiful country—Frederick* and I looked down upon our great King in all his greatness. We were once going to contemplate; had an eye to Solomon; and were very near being very wise; but all this ended in our being extremely happy for near a fortnight together, which was a much better thing.

We old fellows wear well. Pray what is your Excellency about? Are you deep in the ancient nobility of Europe? As his Majesty's affairs are always heavy upon my shoulders, I conclude you suppose me now labouring in the North, with not a moment to myself. But you are mistaken: I am enjoying the finest summer that I ever knew in the most beautiful villa that you ever saw, and I am resolved to remain in this retreat a fortnight. Great men like me cannot always drudge on in business; your Excellency indeed may be indefatigable. How you are laughing now at my greatness! If I were sure of this, I would torture you to death by telling you how much profit I made by my sheep last year; what I expect this; not to say a word of the uncommon crop I have on the ground, and that I have now forage enough for a small Prussian army, though only in the middle of my hay harvest. Secrets will out—and you ministers constantly continue to get hold of them. Upon the whole, you will find that all my greatness consists in taking care of my own affairs; no very easy administration either. But I have known harder times, and so have you, my dear Keith; but the world is now fairly before us. By the bye, I have a most agreeable part of it here at this instant, though not in such a good way as I could wish. The Sebrights are thus far on their road to Tunbridge; he is much

* Lady F. Campbell, so designated throughout the correspondence.

better, and really seems to be getting well. His nerves are strangely shattered, though there is no saying with what; yet I think he will be a man again, and soon, and most sincerely do I wish it. His wife and he are most excellent creatures.

I have been told that your Excellency is very hospitable, and extremely attentive to all his Majesty's subjects who visit Vienna; that you hunt them out, and do every act of civility. If they are old you comfort them, if they are young you encourage them. In case you meet with a young Mr. Sheldon, who is resolved to pick up what he can at Vienna, and to whom your kindness and civility will, I *know*, extend—give me a little merit as to recommendation. His father is a very good Oxfordshire candlestick, drinks a bottle with Forrester and me, and thinks I have *great weight with you*.

Yours most truly,

F. C.

SIR R. M. KEITH TO MR. BRADSHAW.

Vienna, July 21*st*, 1773.

This comes to say, Mr. Thomas Bradshaw, that you are forgiven in consideration of your wounds in the service,* though there can be no reason for my admitting you beyond the *ante-chamber of my affections*, till I have seen proofs of your contrition registered in whole quires of intelligence and entertainment.

If I could condescend to embrace you in my present humour, it would be for the welcome (thrice welcome) information of Sir John Sebright's perfect recovery, and the happy situation of Bill Amherst and his family. These are men indeed! such as my soul loveth; and if immortality upon this clod of earth could belong to any two-legged animal, surely these two, from the gentle

* An accident, subsequently mentioned, during the naval review.

and beneficent tenor of their lives, are amongst those who might best lay claim to it. You are a hard-hearted fellow, Brad, and don't love women, else I would tell you that the trembling exultation of two such angels as the wives of Sir John and Billy, in marking the growing health of the husbands of their choice, is to *me* an idea infinitely affecting. But those fine feelings which Providence has been pleased to twine into the fibres of my constitution, are *caviare* to the multitude; and for the present I will not do you the honour to suppose you susceptible of any similar impressions.

I have had *nine* different descriptions of your Portsmouth show, and am happy to see that a measure of so much propriety met with success so complete and satisfactory. Several millions of John Bulls appear *now* to be all of one mind with regard to their Sovereign and his seamen, which in these latter times is somewhat of a rarity; but I will take upon me to assure them, that in whatever light they set their royal master within the reach of their inspection, they will see him to equal advantage.

I have said this a hundred times (and I spoke from the heart), but I was a placeman, the son of a pensioner, a ribboned slave, and a *Scotchman*, and therefore not to be believed. I have now the bulk of my fellow subjects on my side, and by and bye I shall not meet with a dissenter from that political tenet to preach to, unless I look for them (which in my sober senses I never shall) in that temple of patriotism, the Guildhall of London.

Poor Mr. Miller! Poor Henry Woodfall! not a paragraph nor a squib of sulphurous materials! yet Sandwich's flag was flying, and Bradshaw's *cream* besprinkled the ocean! Hang me! if, in their place, I would have let you off so cheap! As to the honour you enjoyed in having your *leg broken* by the tiller of the royal yacht, I hope that in the first kingly review of

every succeeding reign a *Bradshaw of your line* shall be singled out to undergo the same experiment. It is the least a King of England can do, to distinguish a family whose ancestor showed such a respect for Majesty in the person of the *Royal Martyr!* But enough of this: your pride is already puffed up within an inch of bursting.

Adieu, dear Admiral,

R. M. K.

August 14th.

I am this evening to set out for Hungary, by which I suppose you conclude that I am running away from the debts of my mission. Not *unlikely*, my lord, yet *not true;* for the capital of Hungary is at no greater distance from hence than Henley from London; and there I am to pay my court to the Archduchess and Duke of Saxe Teschen to-morrow, and after a princely repast, and an evening fandango, I shall again step into my chaise, and fly back to Vienna. There will be weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth in both capitals; but what can a man do? Ubiquity comes not within his lot!

In this jaunt, as in every other excursion or party, I am blessed with a trusty companion, in the person of Bartholomew Gradenigo, Knight, Senator, and Ambassador of the Republic of Venice. A rare hand, a man among a million, for he shall preside at a feast, bamboozle an old woman, or flirt with a young one, with any *He* in Christendom; and then, with all this, he is as honest as the day is long, and has had four Doges of Venice amongst his ancestors; which you must needs think renders his company infinitely agreeable. Alas! alas! the Turks have got hold of him; and in six months he removes his household gods from hence to the banks of the Hellespont. I could blubber like a

boy when I think of it; for Gradenigo is to me meat, drink, and raiment. It may be some comfort to you, my dear friend, to know that this jewel of an ambassador is as fat and *gouty*, and *nearly* as great a *courtier*, as your lordship. If I could bring you two together for six months, and feast my five senses with you for that time, I would consent that *chaos should come again*, at the end of it. But human nature does not reach that pitch of felicity!

Apropos; why have you made a secret to me of the abdication of the Great Mogul in favour of our royal Master? I have been wished joy of it a hundred times, and am in expectation of receiving my credentials in a post or two, as Plenipo from the Peninsula of Indostan, with two or three lacks of rupees to support the splendour of my mission. Never were lacks more wanted, or more welcome than those I look for.

Adieu,

R. M. K.

SIR R. M. KEITH TO MR. BRADSHAW.

Vienna, August 25th, 1773.

THANKS to you for your No. 26, and likewise for your hints about the *Milanites* * (that are to be); and if they come in my way (which Heaven avert!) they shall have my best services, and not the *shadow* of a *visit! N'est-il pas vrai? Monsieur de la Crême*—that's your meaning? Everything as *Sir Bob*, nothing as *Sir Pleni*.

Now I would have you to know, Sir, that in matters of punctilio, and etiquette, and right and left hand, and all the other Sir Clement Cotterell*ish* nonsense, I can intersect, in twenty different shapes, the narrow space which divides dutiful observance and dignified stateliness, and never go a hair-breadth beyond my purpose. I

* The Duke and Duchess of Cumberland, then in disgrace at Court.

wish, my dear Brad, that you were fairly kicked out of office, and turned adrift by his Majesty's ministers, that I might have the pleasure of showing you how nicely I can infuse the first cold drops of courtly venom into a pailful of stale cordiality, so as to *curdle* the whole, and separate the two substances for ever afterwards.

You fancy yourself now in the very *core* of my good graces; and so to be sure you are. Because why? You have two or three pretty employments, and a tolerable share of the ministerial confidence. But with all this, my dear lord, if henceforth it shall please Lord North (or any given *premier*) to withdraw from you the breath of his nostrils, I will be bound in the space of three months to retract every jot of our intimacy; and by such imperceptible degrees, that, without knowing how the deuce it came about, you shall find yourself reduced to the distant civility of a *quondam* acquaintance, and yet shall never dare to tax Sir Robert with ingratitude.

There, my dear Brad, is the advantage of a *liberal* education, and I hold it to be a point of as high importance in a man who has his fortune to make, to know how to *unfetter* himself *handsomely* from unfashionable friends, as to be master of the talent of seizing the first feather of the rising wing of favour. But all this is theory, and I long to show you a little of my *practice*. There's Lord Frederick, now; he can do me justice; for he must needs remember how, upon his being dismissed from the Privy Seal, and before he got the registership, I trimmed matters so judiciously, that he had not the least hold of me, *whilst out of place*, and that I was again his *bosom friend* before the seals of his new office were cold.

Do, my dear Brad, pray do me the favour to step a little into the *mire of minority*, only for a month or so,

that I may have some chance for sport with you in my own way; but reserve it for *next meeting* with

Yours,

R. M. K.

SIR R. M. KEITH TO MR. BRADSHAW.

Vienna, August 28th.

You are persuaded, no doubt, that in every great capital a man may, by taking some pains, find out a few choice companions of his own stamp and cast. An arrant mistake, my good lord, and one which I have experienced to my cost. This city is, in many respects, amongst the first in Europe. We have thousands of nobility; universities and academies in abundance; lawyers without end; and clergymen of all colours. I have sought in vain for my *fellows* in all these societies, and what will surprise you more is this, that if (in the course of the last nine months) there has been handled with ability or pleasantry in either of them, any one subject of instruction, moral, civil, or political, it certainly has not been within ear-shot of your friend the Plenipo. All this is nothing; but if, in the same space of time, he had been witness to one joyous meeting, to one hearty laugh, performed by man, woman, or child, he would have taken his share of that gaiety in *lieu of* the information he thirsts after, and have thought himself a gainer by the bargain. The ephemeral fly, which is born in the morning to die at night, might hold up the conversation of one-half our most brilliant circles. The play, the dance, your horse, my coach, a pretty embroidery, or a well-fancied lining, these are the favourite topics; upon every one of which I am a numskull of the first water. I never play at cards; *ergo*, I am not only a stupid fellow, but an useless one.

I would not have you to think, however, that we want capabilities for better purposes than these; but education

and custom are everything, and we have been so much habituated to swim upon the surface of things, that we never take the trouble to inquire whether there be any bottom or not.

With you *Johns* in England, 'tis quite otherwise; for you are often so cursedly profound, that you are never at ease till you are groping and floundering in the very bed of the river. I have seen scores of you stick in the mud, and seldom it is that you show your heads above water. I hate all extremes in society, but I must needs say, that that which falls to my lot carries with it, *now and then*, an insipidity that wears me to the very bone. As I hope for mercy, the King should breed his foreign ministers from the cradle to that calling, give them the education of the department they are to belong to, and by denying them the good things which are peculiar to his kingdoms, fit them for the enjoyment of those which belong to others. I am not puppy enough to think myself wiser, cleverer, or more worthy of esteem than the many people I meet with daily; but I say, and persist in thinking, that 'tis a hard thing to stand alone in the midst of a great city, and be forced to say, as I do, that an eel is more like an oyster than I am to a German fine gentleman.

Love me all of you as my patience deserves,

R. M. K.

SIR R. M. KEITH TO MR. BRADSHAW.

Vienna, September 1st, 1773.

I HAVE, according to your request, laid your dulness at the feet of his Majesty's Plenipo, who, in consideration of that meekness and modesty which shine in your No. 27, has agreed to measure hereafter the merits of his friends' recreations by no other criterion than the scale of Fahrenheit's thermometer, and to make very proper allowance for the variations of the atmosphere.

His Excellency bade me assure you, that, on the 20th August, your weather must have been airy and pleasant to a great degree, as manifestly appears by the productions of that period. When his Excellency was pleased to pronounce this favourable judgment, I observed that he looked as placid and condescending as ever I saw a minister of his rank to do in all my life. So that business is done, my dear Brad; you are now in high favour with the Plenipo; and when your fat ale arrives, I shall employ it properly in keeping down the fire of his genius, and preventing any random spark from singeing the whiskers of his pains-taking correspondents.

Would it were in my power to indulge your curiosity with some flashy descriptions of gala days, and state trappings; but, alas! the present imperial reign has almost totally abolished those gaudy exhibitions, and instead of fifty days in the year in which every grandee was permitted, to give a full scope to the genius of his tailor, and clap upon his back the produce of a thousand acres, we have now but one solitary first of January, to air our finery, and kick up the dust of pageantry. The last New Years' Day cost me seven-and-thirty shillings to the scourers, for furbishing up my Danish liveries, besides seatings to the varlets' breeches, and white chalk for their beaver laces. My predecessor's state coach was tickled up with lead and leaf-gold, wherever the hand of time had touched it roughly; and in it sat Sir Robert, whose portly person was bedizened with a spick and span new regimental suit, richly ornamented with three-and-forty embroidered button-holes, and two shoulder-knots stiff with gold; not to mention two yards and a-half of as handsome Bath ribbon as ever shone upon doughty warlike shoulder. There was an elegance, a taste, a dignified magnificence in the whole, on which my modesty prevents me from expatiating. You see, my dear sir, that I have a pen for a procession, and what a pity it is

that the present emperor, by an unaccountable simplicity of manners, and hatred of show, should have prevented me from returning often to this favourite theme.

I confess that I should find no great difficulty in obeying your lordship's subsequent demands, by furnishing a few smart touches about teeth and tweezers.* But I am afraid that your lordship is not the only person who dips into my letters, and there may be people in the world who would rather forgive a plot against the state, than the smallest and most harmless pleasantry in regard to personal foibles. I have been too long a politician not to have acquired a due deference for inoffensive vanity, which, if properly laid hold on, is, in my opinion, one of the most convenient handles of society; and, strange as you may think it, I hold it to be less dangerous to hint to any man in high office, in whatever country you please, that he has a flaw in his character, than to tell him abruptly that he has a hole in his stocking. But you understand me, and I 'll be bound you never alluded to the possibility of a lordly squint during the administration of the Earl of Bute, nor touched upon tallow complexions in the hearing of the late Mr. Grenville.

Such are the fetters which prudence (that stale daughter of Hugo Grotius,) has hung upon the end of my goose-quill; nor can I be surprised at the preference you give to those interesting dispatches which are furnished to you by my fellow-labourer, the indefatigable Mr. Cressener.

I have not a syllable of news to communicate, that would satisfy your carpenter for the trouble of mending your pantry door; though I must be so bold as to say, that there was a time, and that not above eighteen months ago, when, by a proper application of my letters

* An obvious allusion to the well-known *petit-maitre*-ship of Prince Kaunitz.

from Denmark, you might have prevailed upon that gentleman to give your house, your offices, and your stables a thorough repair for twenty years to come, and not a farthing to pay!

You are an honest fellow for giving me such good news of Sir John and Lady Sebright, and for having reported so faithfully my sincere wishes for their welfare. Do me the same service with all our dear creatures and their husbands. Adieu.

Yours,

R. M. K.

SIR R. M. KEITH TO MR. BRADSHAW.

Vienna, October 13th, 1773.

Well, Sir, you have been in the country, and so have I. You have your dukes and ducalities, I my princes and palatines; with more of the dignified foibles which pertain to high birth, than ever fell to the lot of your whole Anglo-Saxon-Norman house of peers put together. Yet these hurt not me, nor did they hinder me from passing in the midst of them a pleasant and jocund fortnight as any fortnight can possibly be when half a dozen of my chosen comrades were not present. Our pleasantry in Moravia was not precisely the same as that at Mistley;* but there is a *mode* in merriment as there is in everything else, and I don't care a twopenny piece by what rule I am entertained, provided that my soul laughs in its earthly tenement, and that all goes smooth and easy. Our landlord, Prince Kaunitz, has read Rabelais, and made a proper use of his maxims. "*Sois heureux à la mode,*" is the only rule laid down for everybody; and we were five-and-thirty masters and mistresses who adhered strictly to the letter of that *golden law*. Whenever you get your little four-square mansion in the

* The seat of Richard Rigby, Esq.

Isle of Wight, inscribe those words over the door of it, my dear friend, and be sure to stamp them deep upon the mind of the master of the house. In short, my journey to the country has done me good, to mind as well as body; and it has brought me into a closer connection with several valuable people, than all the frippery of town etiquette would permit me to form in the preceding six months. That's the advantage of country living; and faith (between you and me) it is almost the only advantage which belongs to it.

I hope you don't love hunting, and shooting, and coursing, and sniping, and toiling in mud and mire, for the honour of being the *cook's purveyor*. No; you are too much a man of sense and *delicacy;* and I am sure of your approbation when I confess that all the monsters of the forest were slaughtered by these dignified Nimrods, whilst I fetched a walk with fair ladies in the precincts of the shady grove, or, at most, was pleased to approve the labours of the chase from the windows of a gilded landau, in which a dame of quality sat by my side, and two angelic damsels *vis-à-vis*. Don't read this account of my hunting to your brawny beef-eating barons of England; for they have no notion of taste or elegance, and would rather see a hare in her form than the fairest *belle* in Austria. Goths! Goths! my sweet lord! I only wish you could go with me into Moravia next year, and see (only for a start) how we great people live. *Apropos*—you and the Duke of Grafton shall have your Tokay, whenever I meet with any good; and that—whether you are *in or out*.

This sheet may possibly find you at the last bottle with my brother Basil. Tell him and his helpmate tha if they, by their justice and generosity, make the voice of gladness sound through the mountains of Jamaica, they shall have a large share in the *core* of my affections on their return. I long to see how far downright

honesty and blunt zeal can succeed in the governing of mankind. I have seen, before now, parts, policy, law, and learning all meet in one composition, and yet make a sorry governor among them; and if Basil prospers and pleases, as I hope and believe, it will confirm my favourite maxim, that in a wife, or a ruler of men (often synonymous terms), no two ingredients are of such extensive use as a beneficent heart, and an active integrity. There 's no fear of Basil. I 'll pawn my life for him that he will do as much for *others*, with as *little* thought for *self*, as any fellow in the King's dominions.

Yours, &c.,

R. M. K.

SIR R. M. KEITH TO MR. BRADSHAW.

Vienna, Jan. 7th, 1774.

Welcome to my arms, my long-lost correspondent! I must, in the effusion of my heart, tell you a little secret, which is, that the *peccavi* of a friend is balm to my wounds; that the cure it effects is almost instantaneous,—because why? I have no more gall in my system than a sucking turtle-dove. Don't now go to make a bad use of this key to my character, which a wiser man than me would have kept in his pocket. It would be a baseness of which I cannot suspect you, and which even your Treasury education could not justify. Come, shake hands, Brad: all is well; and now to our old chit-chat, as if nothing had ever interrupted it. Oh! I must indulge my fancy by transcribing a few lines from an unfinished letter, which I have just now found in my *porte-feuille*, and which must have been written by some very touchy gentleman, in a moment of bitterness. Perhaps it may make you laugh, though neither you nor I know the persons concerned. At any rate it will make a pretty contrast with the style of this epistle I am now inditing—so here goes:—

"Sir,—Though not altogether hackneyed in the ways of your world, I had long known that in the crazy metropolis you inhabit, a man may be the idol of the people on Monday, and be hanged in effigy on the Friday following. That a man of the Court might embrace you at bed-time with all the demonstrations of the most cordial friendship, lay his head on the pillow, dream that you might ask him a favour *one day*, and therefore *wisely* forget your name in the morning. I had known that a certain quantity of salt water let in between two sworn comrades, would in a short time obliterate all remembrance of the navigator, and free the landsman from every tie of attachment. But what I owe to your lordship, is the precise and accurate experiment of the quantum of time and distance which *can and ought* to cancel in the mind of a man every obligation, and root out all those paltry virtues, such as truth, constancy, and gratitude, which the shallow part of mankind suppose to be the strongest bonds of society. *Ten months and sixteen days precisely*—not an hour more; your lordship has proved it to a demonstration: and it is by your goodness that I am now enabled to calculate so nicely in matters of that sort, that when I see any two brothers hugging one another to-day, I say to myself *slyly*—on the 17th day of next November, I may expect to see these same two gentlemen spitting in each other's faces! This is mighty clever, mighty convenient, and particularly to *me*, who (I confess to your lordship) had the misfortune to be born a very silly, a very credulous fellow, a mere gull in friendship!"——

Well, Brad, the rest of the sheet is pretty much in the same style. He must have been a very choleric blade who wrote it; can you guess why he did not send it? I suspect that the poor author was a Christian,

which is a weakness that some people still have, *even in our enlightened days.*

I rejoice very sincerely, my dear friend, at finding that the little difficulties in pecuniary matters, to which your generous turn of mind had subjected you, are in a fair way to be removed. I claim a share in those high spirits which are returning upon you; but I must beg of you to remember that whenever it may happen that care or pain are brooding in your breast, there is no man on earth who will do more than myself to alleviate or dispel the wayward impressions. I am, perhaps, a pretty light-hearted companion for a man in prosperity; but if I know my own *forte,*—it lies in administering comfort and consolation to the mind of a friend labouring under anxiety or distress. May you never stand in need of that proof of my talents, but if it should unfortunately happen—*you are a cold-hearted dog if you spare me.* This is grave writing, Master Brad—but I tell it you once for all—and now for other matters.

You know, nay you are morally convinced that Lord Suffolk's friendship is my plight anchor in life; you know that the conquest of Denmark could not have brought me anything of half its value. I need not, therefore, tell you with what pleasure I learned his recovery from a long illness, and the continuance of that partial esteem with which his lordship honours me. But I cannot think of employing so good a man's friendship in hammering a *nail which will not drive.* I have good reason to believe that the door of St. Stephen's Chapel will not be opened to me in the way you aim at. Lord March is probably pre-engaged, and Lord North has many better men to employ* than one

* The writer's modesty led him to undervalue his chances of success. The representation of the county of Tweedale, in which his property was situated, was, on his return to England, proposed to him by Lord North, and unanimously carried.

whose vocation may, in all likelihood, detain him for some years abroad. I have a sort of repugnance to sit down in any house where I am not highly welcome, and cannot be in some degree useful. I would not swallow a parliamentary equivocation as to *qualification* for the Speaker's gown; but if the King's servants think that I ought to represent my own paltry county, or any boroughs of Scotland, to which I am entitled by my small property, I shall undertake that service (as I would do any other) with cheerfulness. Now you know, my dear Brad, that I have not a shilling to bestow (nor the intention of bestowing a shilling) upon acquiring a seat in parliament. Ergo—as I told you before, we shall do well to keep Lord Suffolk's friendship for a better purpose. Tell my lord so from me; and tell him that I love and respect him with every nerve of my heart.

I must now talk to you, my friend, about my own money matters, which are indeed (and *unavoidably*) at a lower ebb than ever I knew them. The King's goodness has set me down (and I hope for a length of years) in the very spot of the whole continent where, in point of personal satisfaction, and (as I flatter myself in *time*) of public utility, my own views and wishes would have fixed me. I am (and I am proud to say it) the most contented being in the dominions of Austria. But it is nevertheless true that I have already almost devoured my scanty patrimony in changing of establishments, and doing here, not vain or ostentatious things, but the *needful*, the *essentially needful*, for the honour of my gracious employer. This preface looks like my thanking your honour for putting me in mind that I begin to stand high on the list of Colonels, and that I may soon look for a regiment. Quite otherwise; the King shall never be asked for anything unreasonable, by *me*. There are many men still above me, whose seniority of service gives them a better title to a regiment than I can

pretend to (excepting a Highland one); and I am one of those who think that the King has done for the Keiths ten times more than they deserve, and that these ragamuffins from the North are very rapacious indeed, if they cannot wait to be served with future good things *in their turn*.

Strange language this from a man, who owns his poverty, and is *cramped by it;* but I tell you it is the language I would (and I believe did) hold in the cabinet, of one of the best as well as greatest men in Europe. How the deuce am I to get out of debt, then? say you; why, I'll tell you all my secrets. I will endeavour, by the strictest order (not economy) in my housekeeping, to make both ends meet. I restrict my ambition in regard to money, to the certainty of paying everybody as I go on, and dying possessed of five hundred golden guineas, *lawful property*. If indeed, and that may possibly happen, I shall in a little time see the bottom of my private purse, without my conscience telling me that I have drained it by any private vice,—I shall, in that case, not feel the smallest scruple in saying to my worthy Lord Suffolk, I am reduced to my last guinea; neither my beneficent sovereign, nor your lordship, can wish that I should dip into the pockets of my tradespeople. Give me some public money, or some equivalent for it, in an honest way, *if my services are worth having*, and trust me I shall be a better economist of that money than I have been of my own. I never saw fair reason, and downright truth, fail of their effect in this world; and if ever I am reduced to make this speech, I'll bet you fifty pounds (poor as I am) that his lordship's answer will make me easy. You don't know (and how the deuce should you, for you were bred amongst courtiers), that a man may not care a twopenny piece about ambition or interest, and yet be neither a fool nor a stoic. So much for my confession, which you

will undoubtedly clench with a—Hang the fellow! he will die a beggar, and *deserves it!* I have seven princesses, eighteen nobles, and one cardinal to dine with me to-morrow; the Aulic council in a body on Wednesday; the Counts of the circle of Suabia on Saturday; yet am I dog enough to sigh after a Rigby! Lord, lord, shall I never laugh again?

Yours,
R. M. K.

SIR R. M. KEITH TO MR. BRADSHAW.

Vienna, Jan. 15th, 1774.

I AM heartily sorry that Lord North fell from his horse, but I *infer* from thence that he *was upon one,* and consequently intended to take an airing: which is a sign that amongst the *bettermost* people in England the locomotive faculty is not totally neglected. I hope his lordship will sit long and steadily in the ministerial saddle, and find both his spirits and his stomach improved by cantering an hour or two every day in St. Stephen's Chapel, upon some pleasant tit of opposition.

Evening, six o'Clock.

Whilst I was taking a little morning lounge with your lordship in the manner you see above, a message from a most amiable and virtuous lady (a mother of a family) called me to keep my promise, by being present at the reading of Gulliver's Travels to two sweet girls and a boy, her children, all under ten years of age. The lady was obeyed, as you will believe, and at half an hour after one (I am exact as to the hour) the lady was shipwrecking poor Samuel Gulliver upon the coast of Lilliput, to me and her children—when, behold! a pretty smart shock of an earthquake, which lasted about a minute, interrupted her narrative, without creating any violent emotion or fear. It was undulating and slow, but some

of the chamber-doors creaked on their hinges, and some bits of lime came trundling from the roof of the house. After an interval of less than two minutes, we felt a second shock, much quicker, in the same direction, of west to east, but tremulous, abrupt, and in some measure waving from the horizontal line of the first. A large crystal lustre in the room, with all its dangling ornaments, rung like a chime of bells, and all the servants in the house began to be in an uproar. Mr. Gulliver was laid aside, and we all walked down into the court-yard of the hotel. The weather was calm and pleasant; a gentle thaw with sunshine. We talked for half an hour to the children (who were much more curious than frightened), about comets and earthquakes; and it would have done your heart good to have seen the lady, as solicitous in that moment as in the calmest hour of her life, to prevent her children from adopting false fears, or false impressions. The earth having stood still (to listen to her sage admonitions) we returned to the library—but put a mark in Mr. Gulliver till another day; and I, your humble servant (having swallowed a draught of admiration of so many good qualities), returned to my neck of mutton, and ministerial cyphers at home. 'Tis at the issue of one and t' other, I give you this instructive account of an earthquake, which will make a tremendous figure in the German newspapers. Ah! Brad! if the *narrative* of an earthquake would mend your manners, or awaken your sloth! You are a sad set of men, and I think my dance of to-day should make me resolve to break off all connexion with you; but you may still assure Frederick and the Gang that I loved them whilst the earth stood still, and mayhap may do so, let it wag as it will. Yours, &c.,

R. M. K.

SIR R. M. KEITH TO HIS SISTER.

Vienna, February 16th, 1774.

I SIT down to write with a boyish sort of enthusiasm, about something which a sagacious and deep-read politician should hardly deign to take notice of. But, my dear Anne, I have not yet learnt to value things by their magnitude, and when I tell you the object of my admiration is no other than a country dance, I am not afraid of losing an inch of ground in the opinion of the Hermits. On the contrary, I am careful to cherish and keep up that aptitude for innocent enjoyments which Providence has kindly implanted in me; and make no scruple to own, that when the Vienna puppet show is a good one, I endeavour to form an intimate acquaintance with Punch in the first days of the fair.

But here goes a bit of description of this said country dance, which has set us all a raving. Know, then, that about three weeks ago, *sixteen couple* of our chosen belles and beaux put themselves under the direction of the great Noverre, in order to learn from him one of the prettiest figure dances one can possibly conceive, with the intention of exhibiting it at the public masquerade. The principal ladies of this set (the list of which I give for my father's sake) were Mesdames Thun, Wallenstein, Wurmbrand (née Lichtenstein), Paar, Pergen, Walmoden, Tarouca (née Schönbrunn), Esterhazy, Choteck (née Clary), Hoyos, Zinzendorff (née Schwartzenberg), with Mesdemoiselles Schoenborn, Canal, and Bassewitz. They were dressed *à la Provençale*, in blue and white striped satin; and nothing could be more handsome or airy. Their appearance at the masquerade ten days ago, before three thousand spectators, gave universal satisfaction; and kindled up a spark of keenness in sixteen other couples to imitate or excel them. These were composed of still higher personages—as the Arch-

duchesses Marie Christine and Elizabeth, with the Archduke Maximilian, shone at the head of the list; and were followed by Mesdames Hatzfeld, Palfy (née Colloredo), Metternich, Tekeli, Trautmansdorff (née Colloredo), Esterhazy (née Stahremberg), Goès (née Schwartzenberg), Csaky; with Mesdemoiselles Altems, Palfy, and Czernin. They were dressed in the same form with the others, but in rose-coloured and white striped satin, to make a distinction and variety. The country dance Noverre taught *these* was still more elegant than the first, and the Empress, to give both parties fair play, and to prevent jealousy, ordered that they should exhibit *singly*, and in *conjunction*, at a private ball at Court, as last night.

Conceive now, Mrs. Anne, their imperial majesties, and about one hundred and fifty chosen spectators, seated in the great ball-room, behind an elevated balustrade, with a large orchestra in front on the opposite side, and the whole floor of the room left to the discretion of these merry dancers, not one of whom had yet appeared in the ball-room.

Upon the first stroke of the fiddles, two opposite doors were thrown open, and all the blues on one side, and all the roses on the other, entered gaily, dancing in the Provençal style, and *mixing as they met*. After two or three figures in this medley manner, the roses drew back at once to the balustrade, and left the floor to the blues, who went through their original country dance with infinite precision and grace. They in their turn made room for the roses, who did themselves no dishonour by their emulation, and were, at least, equal to the former in the choice and design of the figures they went through. Each separate dance lasted seven or eight minutes, and when the second was upon the point of concluding, the blues were most ingeniously courted by their rivals to join, and by a *serpentine* stroke of Noverre's genius,

they were twisted and mingled with the others, and *sixty-four handsome men and women* dazzled the eyes, and delighted the hearts of their adorers, for five minutes more, in all the mazes and groups of elegant entanglement, and variegated contrast. At a decisive squeak of the music, all hats in the air, and a low obeisance to the throne! Hey? Mrs. Anne, what say you to my description? Did I gaze with rapture? did I follow certain favourite figures through all their intricacies? did I feel a Provençale twitching at my heart? was I blue? was I rose? I leave all this to your spinstership's sagacity; but remember, if you think this a dull epistle, and you don't like my dance, *you are no sister of Sir Robert's.*

I wish you had seen Mrs. Johnson at the ball. She was certainly, to a vulgar eye, one of the least shining figures in the hall; but a propriety, a look and mien of modest merit, an expression of *sensibility!* You understand me, Mrs. Anne, or you are more of a numskull than I take you for. Adieu.

R. M. K.

SIR R. M. KEITH TO MR. BRADSHAW.

Vienna, Feb. 17th, 1774.

You know nothing about a Popish Carnival, do ye? You have no idea of what it is to live for six weeks together in a kettle-drum, as I have been doing; and because why? His Holiness has been pleased to allot that space of time yearly to the gratification of every worldly appetite, and probably with a view to give one a surfeit of them. If that surfeit be salutary, I am in a state of grace; for no man ever saw Ash Wednesday arrive with more cheerfulness than I have done. Now for a little friendly confab, in answer to your warm-hearted No. 1.

First, then, for the Tweedale business, in which I

find my debt of gratitude greatly increased towards the several illustrious personages who are so good as to interest themselves in it. You, my dear Brad, have shown an activity and zeal which I cannot sufficiently acknowledge; and I make no scruple to rest the whole affair upon so firm a basis, with this only stipulation, that neither the Duke of Grafton, Lord North, nor the Earl of Earls, be teased or plagued to make of me (what in all likelihood God never intended) a lawgiver of nations. If the matter can be carried smoothly, without injuring the claim of any modest man upon the spot, I shall look upon it as a happy circumstance; but whether it shall be my lot, for seven years to come, to get into the chapel of St. Stephen by the great door, or to tip the old man for a peep into politics from the gallery, I shall feel myself equally honoured by the good opinion of my patrons, and invariably solicitous to deserve the continuance of it. I shall write to old Keith, to give you some clear notions of what they tell me may produce an opening in my little county; for at this distance, and with the slight information I am master of, I might confuse matters in endeavouring to explain them. If he should not come up to town this year, do you, my dear lord, write him ten lines for elucidation, and I promise you it will not be his fault if all is not fairly stated. Our family have long had the privilege of *writing frank* letters, without being over anxious to obtain the right of directing them in the same manner. But Brad has undertaken it, and R. M. K. shall hereafter stand for eighteen pence in any post-house in Christendom. Enough of this *bore*. I say no more; a word's enough to the wise, and half a word is more than enough to the kind-hearted. This phrase recalls me to Lord Suffolk, whose goodness to me is the most flattering, as well as indefatigable, of all sentiments. I do not trouble his lordship with frequent expressions of

my gratitude, because I know that his own heart tells him what mine is, and that he looks upon my warm attachment to the end of life as a part of his goods and chattels. I wish, from my heart, that a hale Highland constitution could be shared like a country common; and then hang me if I did not spare a comfortable slice of mine to Lord Suffolk, as the only adequate return I can ever make for all his benefits. This constitutional liberality will seem less meritorious, when I tell you that I am possessed of ten times more health than can at present be turned to any good purpose by a fellow like me; who is at once a platonic lover, a water drinker, an insipid courtier, and a dull politician. Fallen, how fallen! Aye, this is a mournful consideration; but there must be some leaden figures in the puppet-show of Europe, and as I find myself growing every day more heavy, I comfort myself that it is *all for the good of Old England.* If ever you men of the ministry bring me home, and are at a loss for a place to set me down in, you need only recollect the plumber's yard, near Hyde-park corner, and stick Sir Robert (the Imperial Mercury) between the haymaker and his wife, who have stood snugly there these twenty years.

Yours,

R. M. K.

SIR R. M. KEITH TO MR. BRADSHAW.

Vienna, March 5th, 1774.

I HAVE conducted friend Chamier's* botanical negociation in so masterly a manner, that in the course of three or four days I shall be in possession of as many seeds of different plants as will make up the weight of

* The amiable Under-Secretary at the War-office, and relative of Mr. Bradshaw; whose passion for flowers had induced him to request Sir Robert to procure him rare specimens from the Imperial gardens.

half a pound. But as I perceive that Mons. Jaquin* has very needlessly taken the trouble to wrap them up in forty or fifty different parcels, I shall presume (in order to save pains and postage) to empty them *all* together into one strong sheet of *whity brown*, which shall be forwarded without loss of time. Now, my dear Brad, you will easily conceive that this little expedient of mine will add greatly to the keenness as well as rapture of Chamier, and the King's gardener; to whom my best advice is, immediately upon the receipt of this, to clear out and prepare with the greatest nicety about half an acre of their best kitchen ground, upon which they are to sow my multifarious *half pound*, as soon as it arrives; and then, laying themselves down upon the ground at the two extremities of their *half acre*, they may in less than a month (especially if it showers plentifully) read Monsieur Jaquin as he rises out of the earth, and display their knowledge by describing in Gardeners' Latin every tree, pea, bush, or berry, as it first pops its green head above the fostering mould.

Common sense, my dear lord, is as rare a plant as any in the whole budget; and your lordship will not be surprised that I have, upon this occasion, thrown in my small quota for the benefit of botany. I dare hardly take upon me to request that my share in the transaction should be made known to the King's gardener *in person;* but if Mr. Chamier would be so kind as to take an opportunity, in one of their learned lectures, just to hint to that great man the name of his seedsman, Sir Robert, at Vienna, it might do me a great deal of service in bettering my fortune, which at present is considerably on the wane. I hate vanity, my dear Brad, and that you know; but as my money is gone, it may not be amiss to give you some idea of the

* The Emperor's head gardener.

advantages it has produced to me in my public capacity. During the late carnival, I had the honour to feed, fatten, and stuff at my table, at least three hundred of the first lords and ladies of the Holy Empire. I went to work ably, for I laid the groundwork of their surfeits with beef, pudding, and potatoes, for the honour of Old England, building thereupon with all the ragouts, pies, and sauces of France; and finishing the superstructure with the jellies, ices, spices, and devildums of Italy. This succeeded to a wonder. Every guest smacked his lips and unbuttoned his waistcoat at the second course; and several ladies had their stay-laces cut open, in *honor of my confections;* so that in the space of six weeks I had the satisfaction to see that no less than three jaundices, five dropsies, and thirteen apoplexies amongst those great personages, were fairly and honestly laid to my door, and that of my kitchen. I need not add, that with so much well-earned glory on my side, I am not mean-spirited enough to grudge the melting of my last guinea. It would, I own, give me pleasure to know where I shall find, in six months hence, a leg of mutton for self and servants; as my best friend, the butcher, talks of leaving off business. But this is only a mere matter of curiosity, for you know that no man who has six or seven sounding titles like mine, and three or four Brads and Rigbys near the British treasury, can be in any danger of starving.

I was in rare trim for scribbling nonsense, when a grave Aulic counsellor (of a light airy figure, like the late Lord Winchelsea) forced my door, in order to furnish me with an hour or two's amusement, by explaining to me the lawful right of the branch of Hohenzollern to the male fief of Kecklinghausen, which, indeed, he made out as clear as noon day; and if you, my dear friend, have still any doubts about the matter, I will lay it out before you in black and white. You have no

notion of these pretty pastimes, which now and then fall to the lot of Hugo Grotius's children; but I *conjecture* that you may have some Irish cousins who can plague you as heartily as any German counsellor whatever, and *that, you know, comes to the same thing.*

I forgot to tell you that I am famished for news from Boston, and curious beyond measure to know what Dr. Franklin says in his own defence. Everybody here talks wildly about liberty, and electricity, *because they understand neither;* and I am shrewdly suspected to be a friend to monarchy and King George, and therefore to have seen everything that regards America and the Doctor with an eye of partiality. I shall fight, however, a rare battle, under your banner; only give me now and then a few materials to dumbfounder my noisy opponents. I ask only a clear stage and no favour. Adieu, God bless you, your letters are the *baume de vie* to

Yours ever,

R. M. K.

SIR R. M. KEITH TO MR. BRADSHAW.

Vienna, April 2nd, 1774.

Your alarm during the illness of a certain lady does you no injury *in my* opinion, because I allow every man his oddity, and that of loving one's *own* wife may be forgiven, provided that a man is not impudent enough to own it in public. I have not told a creature in Vienna that Monsieur de la Crême had been guilty of such a weakness, because I make it a rule never to tell improbable stories, and because anecdotes relating to conjugal affection would hardly gain credit here. Do you know, my dear friend, I am sometimes a good deal mortified in observing that John Bull is still unpolished enough to set a high price upon certain threadbare fashions, and exploded virtues, which nobody in more

polite countries would like to be suspected of; and you must forgive me, my dear Brad, if I just hint to you that there are capitals in the world where, for these hundred years past, no man has so much as dreamt of weeping for his wife. Thus, you see, I have convicted your lordship of *two vulgarities* in one letter, but I have touched upon them with a gentle hand, knowing that in other points your lordship is quite the man of fashion. Come abroad, Brad; I have told you again and again, that not even the taste of your neighbour, Sir William Chambers, can set the highest polish on your manners without a dash of foreign education. A six months' tour across sea, would do you, and half a dozen more of his Majesty's ministers, more good than you can possibly imagine.

I am glad to see that you are turning over a new leaf with the tea-spillers; and I should not be sorry if, while your hand is in, you should turn over *half a dozen;* for, to say the truth, those gentlemen had forgot the greatest part of their *catechism.* But you are wiser men and better politicians than I can pretend to be, and all I wish of you is to *think before you speak, and do what you threaten.* Your hobbling kind of gait in that walk, with your *two steps on,* and *three steps back,* have neither done yourselves much credit, nor good to anybody, as far as I can hear.* John Bull is a very honest, sedate, and firm-minded gentleman, when he reflects soberly. I am persuaded he will have done so upon this occasion, and I trust that the moderate and well-timed exertion of the parental authority, which is so naturally vested in him, will produce, without much bustle, the best and

* The sagacious, though at that time unfavourably disposed, King of Prussia, thus expressed the same sentiment to some English gentlemen: "If you intend conciliation, your measures are too rough; if subjection, too gentle."

most durable effects upon the morals and filial duty of his turbulent children. You would laugh heartily if you heard half of the wild and absurd conjectures which are made within ear shot of the Highlander. He lets the small talkers by profession take their swing; but if a *Matadore* steps into the mud of false argument, Sir Robert does not fail to take the politest as well as shortest method of seizing him by the shoulder and lifting him out of the kennel. A little of your lordship's intelligence upon the subject, which is likely to grow more interesting every day, will, I assure you, be of real service to the knight, who is wedded to John Bull, and will not allow his character (which John often allows to be abused in open court, for want of proper instructions to his lawyers) to be called in question.

Good morning to your lordship,

R. M. K.

SIR R. M. KEITH TO MR. BRADSHAW.

Vienna, June 10th, 1774.

It was indeed very lucky for me that I did not know of the dangerous illness of Lord Suffolk till I heard of his perfect recovery. His gout is almost the only drawback I have in life, and without having faith in quacks, or the most distant wish that he should make experiments on his own constitution, I have sent to England, by my Turkish Dragoman, a parcel of powders for the gout, which are very gentle in their operation, and have been tried here with success by some people of the highest rank. You don't suppose I mean to go halves with the inventor (if they succeed, which pray inquire), and get rich by curing *Sir Laurences* in scores, but you will believe me when I say I would give half my present wealth to be the means of making life comfortable to my good Lord Suffolk. You tell me in your last that

Mr. Stanley is the bearer of your No. 9, inclosing a letter from his lordship. I wish I had both, but I have never heard a syllable of Mr. Stanley since he left England. He will pop in here one of these days, and add to the score of *Johns* I possess already. They are good young men, and do us honour. I have Mr. Coke (*the* Coke), Mr. Monson, Mr. Watson, Mr. Galloway, &c.; and I expect to-morrow George Grenville's son, and Lord Bulkeley, with Mr. Fortescue, &c., &c. They seem to be pleased with this town, and I do my best to keep them so.

I think the Duke of Cleveland knows what to do with his money, else I should be sorry for his new accumulation. I have seen few heads that could carry thirty thousand pounds a year, without *ruling a little*, and still fewer hearts that were the better for their possession: but I am sure black George bids as fair as any man of my acquaintance to be both happier and more beneficent, because he is rich. Pray, offer my respects to the Duke of Cleveland, and assure him I shall ever retain the warmest sense of the obligations I owe to the Duke of Grafton.

You delight me by the account of my old gentleman's * health and spirits; and they will certainly have been augmented by the gracious reception of our master, and the kindness he has met with from so many warm-hearted friends. You ask me what the deuce the people see in those Keiths to be so partial to them? Why truly Brad, that's not a very easy question to solve; but in my notion the best quality about the Keiths is their universal good-will towards mankind, joined to the most cordial gratitude towards their benefactors. They are the most fortunate family I

* Mr. Keith, father of the writer, who was then paying a most gratifying, but, alas! (notwithstanding his then health and vigour), final visit to London.

know, and certainly the more so *because they value what they have, and covet nothing.* To enjoy the blessings of this world is by far more difficult than to acquire them, and so here ends my dissertation!

I am preparing for the reception of my old friend, Mr. Conway, and I will show him camps in Austria, aye, and gold mines in Hungary, too, if I can get a fortnight's breathing time from the Hugo-Grotian oar. You think when I get into these mines, I might contrive to filch a *sample*, as you did when you held the purse of the nation; but I won't, for a rich Keith would be a monster in nature. *Apropos* to fortunes: I have just received a German newspaper, which gives me a great deal of insight into your's, and tells me many things which your modesty has been desirous to conceal. I am sure Dick Cox will take pleasure in translating for you; but that you may not die with impatience, I must tell you that my German newspaper has shrewdly discovered that Lord Suffolk is quitting his present employment for another (which I hope is a lie); secondly, that Lord Stormont is to be Secretary of State—and the great Mr. Bradshaw (I have put a + at your name in the black letter,) formerly secretary to the Earl of Bute, is to be—*created an Earl, and sent Ambassador to Paris.*

This last article I firmly believe, both because you formerly travelled as far as Calais with infinite advantage to yourself and others, consequently you are best acquainted with the French court, and all possible ministers, and master—as I am a living witness, of the French tongue in the highest perfection. If you have not already got a secretary to your embassy, I beg leave to recommend to your lordship the ingenious Dr. Franklin, who seems to be out of employment, and would take particular care of your private correspondence. I shall certainly call upon your Excellency

at Paris the first time I pass that way; and yet there are people who will say that one learns nothing from newspapers. Why! without this sheet of three farthings, you might have been the oldest earl in England, before I had heard a word of the matter. I love a fat ambassador like your lordship; it gives one a good opinion of the country that sends him. You know the miseries of France in the late war were never fairly laid open to the public, till the scraggy Duke de Nivernois set his tiny foot on the shore at Dover. I myself am tolerably plump, but not to be compared to you; and why should I? for you know I am only a paltry plenipo. I have only to beg of you to say to the circle you shine in, every thing that ought to be said in my name, and in the language of affection. Adieu, my dear lord. I hope (spite of the newspaper) you are as much my friend as ever.

Yours,

R. M. K.

SIR R. M. KEITH TO MR. BRADSHAW.

Vienna, June 23rd, 1774.

I HAVE a letter from my father of the 8th, full of good news. He had seen Lord Suffolk and all friends well. He is enchanted with the universal affection he has met with; and is setting out for Hampton Court, and Coombank, &c. Pray Brad, is it Christian-like to envy one's father?

And so my old friend, Mr. Conway, is upon the road to visit me; and welcome he shall be! for he was a kind patron to me, while I revelled in the wealth of eight and sixpenny half-pay. Let me tell you, Brad, if I had not a stock of gratitude about me, I should be one of the most miserable fellows upon earth. Pray, did old Keith and you get your *bore out* concerning St.

Stephen's and his chapel? I fancy that fabric will fall to the ground, like so many others of the same nature; and I don't think the Danish Knight will break his heart about the matter. Yet that same chapel is become mighty jocose of late, and cannot fail to be highly entertaining.

You have had stout work in your session of Parliament. That same Quebec story has to me a world of meaning, and, perhaps, some years hence that bill may be found to have an effect as extensive and salutary as any that has passed for many years. These German newspapers are continually harping upon Lord Suffolk, Lord Stormont, and Lord Brad; I am particularly connected with all these, and yet I know nothing. To those who question me, I pretend to be at the bottom of everything; yet, in fact, the shoeblack in St. James's Street knows more of the secrets of that neighbourhood than I do. Will your parliament meet again, or are you all starting with your purses in your hands? Among the young Johns who are here, there are at least half a dozen who intend to serve poor old England with their best assistance and advice in the new parliament. They are comely fellows, have high spirits and good stomachs, and kick the world before them; so that I think the venerable lady will be greatly benefitted by such a recruit. Joking apart these young blades will do you honour, in or out of doors.

I suppose that my aged parent has turned his face northward long ere now; and carried home with him that peace of mind and contentment which pass all price or purchase. His visit was a proof at once of a good heart and a sound head. His son, Sir Robert, is grown a grave blockhead by all accounts; but I am told he is not incorrigible if he soon falls again into good hands. These d—d Turks and Russians won't let an honest emigrant return to half a dozen years'

grass and clover in his own country. Surely they won't fight eternally, let them be ever so bloody-minded! This is but a shabby sheet, but I am a penitent sinner, and whether saint or sinner,

Yours,

R. M. K.

SIR R. M. KEITH TO MR. BRADSHAW.

July 24th, 1774.

Tell Lord Barrington that his two nephews are here; that they are very genteel and well-behaved young men, and that they shall have the best company, wine, and welcome, that this capital can afford them. I have just twenty Johns under my wing at this moment, exclusive of Mr. Conway, whom I expect, with three or four more in a week's time. I think I do them justice both in breeding and feeding; and they seem highly satisfied with me and my dear creatures, who lay themselves out to give them satisfaction.

They shall begin next week to swallow my silver dishes, (like Eneas's harpies) for I have melted down my last candlestick, and have ordered it to be served up to them (and forty more friends) in the shape of fifty ragouts, and as many *fricassees*. I make a short life and a merry, and if these Johns, when they return home, do not do honour to my hospitality, why truly I must be bold to say that their hearts are not so good as their stomachs. Tell Lord Suffolk that his young cousin, Mr. Cecil, is here, and behaves extremely well. To say the truth, I have great honour by my present batch of countrymen, and they are perfectly well received from the *top* to the bottom of Austria. Lady Mary Coke sent me a gold snuff-box t'other day, as a present, because I had been civil to her here. I suppose you would not be sorry if I took the

same method of acknowledging the civilities I have met with in South Audley Street; but I'm not such a noodle neither, my dear lord. I have heard you say, as a lesson to your sweet babes, that he who pays in gold for *past* favours is a blockhead; so you see I have learnt something by living in your lordship's company. There 's a Mr. Rigby, too, in the world, who conferred sundry obligations upon me—but you know I have a right to forget them, as they are *at least a twelvemonth old.* But here come half a score of Etonians. I must lay you aside till to-morrow, and then you shall know the state of the Polish delegation, and the latest accounts from the siege of Silistria.

Good bye, dear Brad.

SIR R. M. KEITH TO MR. BRADSHAW.

Vienna, August 29th, 1774.

I HAVE a better excuse for my silence of some weeks than you, perhaps, are aware of; for after doing the honours of Austria to all the rising generation of Great Britain, and showing to my old patron, Mr. Conway, that affectionate welcome he had a right to expect from my deep-rooted gratitude, I set out upon a very active as well as pleasant ramble through Hungary. That kingdom, though one of the most fertile in Europe, and rich in those paltry metals which damn mankind, is in many respects so unlike the countries that surround it, that in two days' journey from hence, I thought myself already removed to the other side of our terraqueous globe; and the more so, as with my *ten languages,* I could make never a one of the six nations which inhabit Hungary comprehend a word I said.

These inhabitants have been brought together by all the strange accidents of twenty emigrations, and as

many civil wars; and some of these hordes, coming from the Chinese wall, some from the White Sea, some from Saxony, and others from Scandinavia, and even Rome—their having scratched the surface of the earth (for their agriculture is no better) for some centuries, under the same dominion, has not been a sufficient reason for mixing their breeds, or moulding down their opposite peculiarities into one uniform national character. Their dress, language, religion, and manners, still savour strongly of their distant origin; and if I had been a philosopher instead of a plenipo, I might have reaped more advantage from the contemplation of this hodge-podge of humanity, than I have hitherto done in my visits to all the refined nations of Europe; who, bating the cut of a coat, or the curl of a wig, have a tiresome sameness in every feature and opinion, which blunts the curiosity of a traveller.

Instead of turning my journey to this liberal purpose, I went (*like a blockhead*) into the very bowels of the earth to learn to know gold and silver in all their disguises; and to see how they are torn thence by the stubborn hands of a set of men who voluntarily abandon the sight of the sun, to feed the avarice of others, and agree to content themselves with black bread and onions, in order that some gentlemen whom they never saw may keep race-horses. This is very strange, my dear Brad, and the first man who said to a fellow-creature, "go into that dog-hole, and starve industriously in digging out some gold, that I may spend it"—was indeed a very impudent scoundrel!

And what do you think of a *Keith* going into that same hole with much pains and trouble, to see whether a blue stone, or a grey stone, produces that gold which he despises, and would not purchase by the sacrifice of one single crotchet of sentiment? Yet this have I been doing for some days together; and if I had not

distributed all the money in my pocket amongst these miserable *gold-finders*, I should have been afraid at last that my principles had been tainted by the study of metallurgy! Luckily for my philanthropy, the surfaces of those hills, (which are thus ransacked for precious curses) are inhabited by a set of simple Sclavonians, or Vandals; who, amidst the most romantic of all earthly situations retain an originality of character, and a rudeness of manners, which show that the interior of their mountains has happily been carried very far away from them.

But I am writing a dissertation instead of a letter; and I don't think that is either to your purpose or mine. Well! now to the rest of my Journal. From these hills, whence the sinews of war are extracted, I went to the Imperial camp at Pesth, to see in what manner and by what weapons, God's creatures may be swept off the face of the earth in the most effectual and expeditious method. I saw ten thousand men on foot, and nearly as many on horseback, who, if the field be wide enough, and the day long enough, will cheerfully undertake to exterminate twice their number of any given nation under the sun. This, you know, my dear Brad, was a mighty clever sight after the other gold story; and I naturally inquired whether the entrails of the mountains were not distributed in handfuls amongst these hardy executioners. I found, to my astonishment, that the art of killing Christians is practised in this country, at so cheap a rate, that each of these heroes, I had just admired, thought his labour amply repaid by twopence halfpenny a day, and a crust of dry bread into the bargain. This afforded me a fresh lesson of morality, and my love of mankind would have undergone a second shock, if I had not observed that these fire-eating gentry were as sober and orderly a set of people in their private life as any I had ever met with.

August 30th.

I have sent Mr. Conway to the King of Prussia's camp at Breslaw, from whence he will proceed to take a second touch of the Austrians at Prague, and after all this we shall see him again for a day or two at Venice, on his way to Paris. Our German newspapers have proved that Mr. Conway has been signing treaties, and forming alliances at every Post-house upon the road since he left England; but I (poor devil!) know *nought* of the matter, and am bought and sold in the political market like an Essex calf in Smithfield. Remember, I tell you, I am answerable for no treaties but those I set my name to; and I enter my caveat against the supposition of my having had any hand in the late Turkish peace, which is, indeed, the most prodigal piece of parchment that has been blotted by any Mussulman since the days of Mahomet. Did I ever tell you how much I like your young Stanley? He is a very lively, good-humoured, gentlemanlike young fellow as any I know; and behaved with great propriety in a sort of *incog* visit I advised him to make to the Emperor's camp in Hungary. Stanley has a strong vocation for the military, and I wish his friends would set him afloat in that channel betimes. Young Edmonstone was likewise of the party, and you may tell Lord Fred that I show him kindness for his own sake as well as that of his family. My saucy younkers are indeed above the common standard, and I flatter myself none of them will be the worse for their stay in Vienna. My city will get into vogue by their report of it, and I shall be *ruined*, but what of that?—a beggarly Scotchman set upon a prancing horse must needs ride to the devil. I pity poor Lord Egremont for his uncle's negligence in not making a will to leave his fortune away from him. It does not happen once in a century that riches bring happiness and contentment along with them.

But there is an exuberance of wealth in the case of Lord Egremont which may go nigh to exclude these blessings entirely. I do not think, my dear Brad, that there is any chance of your ever being exposed (any more than myself) to that calamity. We have no Irish or Scotch uncles who may *heedlessly* overwhelm us with a torrent of riches.

Within these eight-and-forty hours I have received with infinite pleasure your two kind letters, and I thank you for them in the abundance of my heart. What a pity that your sea voyages, your Saltash trip, and all your patriotic labours as Lord Mayor, should have brought you a return of your nasty ague? Men of your stamp should have a patent for plunging into all sorts of dissipation with impunity. I am glad, however, to see by your latest epistle that you have so far recovered health and spirits as to be able to do the honours of the Isle of Wight, and Fawley, and Quarley, and the other distant country-seats to the amiable and friendly clan of the Cornwalls. You wish the Knight of Denmark were of the party. Alas! my dear Lord! his Excellency is grown such a methodical clockwork sort of a courtier, that you might reap as much pleasure from the society of one of the Chinese figures in Cox's museum, as from that of the quondam facetious Sir Bob. There is no fire in the brain of man which a diplomatic extinguisher will not smother effectually in a short term of years. I hope and believe that the warm affections of the heart are not so easily quenched, and that, indeed, is my only comfort.

A letter I had from my sterling Lord Suffolk by Pisani, (and such a letter!) has administered more comfort, and more intense satisfaction to every exquisite feeling of my inward man, than any words can express. Poor dog as I am, I would not barter that letter against a swingeing pension for life upon your kingdom of

Ireland. You may tell my Lord Suffolk from me that he never bestowed a sheet of paper to better purpose since he was born, as I know that his humane purpose was to make me happy. I have told you twenty times, and now repeat it with infinite gratitude, that no human being this day upon earth ever had so many striking proofs of genuine friendship, and disinterested kindness, showered upon him by his fellow-creatures, as I have had from the cradle to this hour. Ask yourself,—ask Lord Suffolk, and Rigby, and the Drummonds, and the Amhersts, and the *Gang*, and all their wives and daughters, if I over-rate my good fortune; and, if I have not the fairest title to talk enthusiastically of the virtues of human nature?

This romantic exclamation may, in the opinion of every member of *Almack's*, or the *Savoir-vivre*, be downright nonsense; but it is the nonsense which serves me for food and raiment, and in the enjoyment of which I shall live and die. I don't like the last news from America any more than your worship; but we have good men and true at the head of everything, and he must be a shallow politician who expects that so many topsy-turvy heads can be set right afresh without a deal of pains and perseverance. Pray, God love you, my dear Brad, let me know now and then a little of the true state of things there; for I should get into low spirits about that very interesting business, if I were left entirely to public newspapers, and popular clamour.

Adieu, yours,

R. M. K.

SIR R. M. KEITH TO MR. BRADSHAW.

Vienna, September 15th, 1774.

I HAVE been hurried off my legs these last three weeks with running backward and forward from capi-

tals to camps, and initiating my young Johns in all the rites of Mars and Venus. On Sunday last, this courtly campaign was concluded by a most delightful show, the description of which would do honour to the pen of Sir William Chambers. The ladies of the court, with all their diamonds and danglers, were marshalled in their gayest attire, under a sumptuous pavilion, on the summit of a romantic hill, which commanded an extensive view of a charming country.

This hill was fortified in the slight manner of a temporary post for a small army, and during several hours of the finest afternoon that was ever seen, the hill was surrounded, invested, and attacked in form, by three different corps of blooded-minded foes, who arrived by forced marches from Turkey, Bohemia, and Italy, to make the second chapter of the Rape of the Sabines. The little chosen band charged with the defence of the dear creatures, performed wonders, and (contrary to the rules of your countrymen,) defended the place by *inches;* yet, at length, overpowered by numbers, and drenched in blood, they were forced to capitulate in the centre of the fortress; and by an effort of magnanimity, which does honour to the generous victors, they showed their own gallantry, and their respect for our's, by allowing us to retain, and carry off, all our damsels, unruffled in a hair of their head-dresses.

It was a noble day, Master Brad, and I flatter myself that our ladies from their pavilion, did so much execution in the eye-shot way, as left the conquerors no mean impression of their charms and discipline. General Clinton, and Lord Thomas, who were just arrived from the Turkish wars, declared that they had seen nothing half so hot in the fields of Silistria, as this last scene of our Luxemburg campaign; and, if it had not been for the ice-creams and lemonade, which were poured down our dusty throats during the heat of the

engagement, not a man of us would have been able to say one tender thing to our Dulcineas for a week after. Clinton will tell you all this story better than I can, and you will get it from him soon, for he left this yesterday, intending to call at the Imperial camp at Prague for a few days, and then push home with all his budget of military adventure. I have sent a large detachment of my younkers to Prague, and am reduced to half a dozen, amongst whom is the heir of Sir Archibald Edmonstone. Your Stanley (by the bye, a very lively lad,) is gone to the Bohemian wars, but promises to come back and winter at Vienna. The two Fawkeners, alas! will arrive when all the sport is over.

September 16th.

I would give my best suit of gala clothes for the gift of a six months' fore-knowledge of your American affairs. You can't imagine, my dear lord, how deeply I am interested in the success of those measures, which, in my opinion, every principle of sound policy, and national dignity, dictated to our matadores upon this trying occasion. Hitherto, no voice has been heard from America, but that of the noisy brawlers for licentious democracy. There must be somewhere, in that vast continent, a set of men, who respect law, and love order. I long to hear these men speak out, and when they do, I hope, my dear Brad, that you will be their echo to my attentive ear.

The nonsense with which I am worried upon that subject, is not to be credited: and though I am not called upon to make a regular defence of the steps of government, or to foretell their probable consequences, to every idle fellow who talks of America without knowing its position upon the globe, within fifty degrees of latitude—yet for my own private satisfaction, and now and then to lay in a word where it may be

àpropos, I shall really think myself indebted to you for every scrap of solid information which can give me a just idea of what *now is,* and what may naturally *be expected there,* in time coming. A dissertation upon colonial governments and colonial parties, is what I neither expect nor wish from you, my dear lord; but when day-light begins to break in upon yourself, pray let a glimpse of it fall upon my dark closet. Your counteraction of the alarming report of an immense desertion among our soldiers, gives me great pleasure, and I have already made use of it to knock half a dozen lies on the head.

You judge very sagaciously in deciding that I made the Turkish peace, and defeated the French Chancellor: and when you consider that in the course of the same six weeks, I have, in concert with Mr. Conway, made four or five stout treaties of peace and commerce, and alliance, you will be forced to say that I work hard to deserve the privilege of devouring my last guinea in the service of government. I shall send home with the ratification of all the above-mentioned treaties, my humble request for a statute of bankruptcy, which I flatter myself will not be thought a presumption beyond the merit of my feeble services.

You fancy, my dear Brad, that I am joking as to the tottering state of my finances. But it is a melancholy truth that with more marks of favour conferred upon me than I ever looked for, or merited—with a more grateful and contented disposition than most people are blessed with—I find myself unavoidably verging into beggary; because my place, my principles, my duty towards the King and my countrymen, lay me under *indispensable obligations* of expense which are, from their nature and from inveterate custom, carried to a pitch which exceeds my appointments, and swallows up the last shreds of my private fortune. I live amongst

great Austrian lords, whose tables are costly and splendid, and ambassadors from great courts, whose appointments are at least the double of mine. I neither cope with, nor ape any body in magnificence; but the minister of England in the first court in Europe, must live not only hospitably, but handsomely, especially if he has frequently a score of young fellows of the first fashion of his country to introduce into the best company of the capital.

This is not a representation or a remonstrance, my dear Brad, but a plain matter of fact which I lay before you in the same frank good humour that I do every thing that concerns me nearly; and I promise you, at the same time, that I have not at this moment a shadow of a *grievance* in my mind, and that I shall go on cheerfully till I have melted the last of my dirty acres in Tweeddale, and then, (with that gaiety and openness which my friends have a right to expect from me) I shall say to my worthy superiors, "Here honesty bids me stop short, I have no more guineas of my own to dispose of, I cannot stoop to eat my butcher's beef without knowing for certain that he is to be paid for it; you must help me, or have done with me." Well, what do you say to my speech? Don't you think it will be pretty much of a piece with the rest of my conduct? I am very sure of one thing, that it will neither hurt nor surprise any of the honest men whom I have the happiness to call my friends as well as superiors.

If I had the opportunity, or (to call it by a juster name) the *levity*, of running away from the expense as well as cares of my profession every now and then, and spending a year or two at a time in diplomatic labours at my *father's fireside*, all might be well, and my finances recover their pristine plumpness through downright *indolence*. But I have a something about

me which is averse to this method of recruiting; and, right or wrong, I have never once asked a leave of absence, either as a military man or a minister, during the twenty-seven years I have had the honour of serving his Majesty; and for no other reason but that my mind told me I had something to do in the precise station allotted to me. I don't know how the deuce I got up to the ears in this long story of the rise and progress of my poverty!

Oh! here comes a post from England, and your honour's letter of September 2nd. I do think, my dear lord, that you make as comfortable a plum-pudding of this transitory life as any gentleman I know. You have Mrs. Brad and the brats, with all the *heaps* of home enjoyments for the great ingredients; you have suet and marrow in courtly occupations and luncheon offices; you have plums and currants in abundance from the county of Cornwall; eggs, salt, and seasoning in a set of excellent companions, and I, poor dog, am the glass of Old Nantz that you *souse* into the midst of the composition, to make it sit light upon your stomach, and save you from heart-burnings. Why faith, this is no bad receipt of your's, my lord, and in these worst of times, I should be very glad if each of my bosom friends had as wholesome a mess in his private corner. But there lives but one Brad in a century; and if every one were to aim at being a mayor and a member, and a lord and a senator, and a sylvan swain, and all in *perfection*, as your worship does, the world would not be wide enough to hold half a score of you.

In the course of the last two months, I have seen you trotting down philosophically to Squire Rigby's along with Lord Suffolk, there to solace in the very quintessence of good society and exquisite cheer.

I have seen you return to your royal castle at

Hampton Court, there to revel in lawful joys, and astonish the county with your hospitality. I have seen you bamboozling a borough at Saltash, and drowning common sense in port and politics as Mr. Mayor, and then dancing yourself into health and stomach again in leading up the ball with the buxom wives and daughters of your constituents. I have seen you flying like a comet over half the island, and dipping luxuriously into the sweets of all the companies you illuminated, at Fawley, Quarley, and fifty other country seats. I have had a peep of you in a snug and peaceful eclipse at Hendon; and now you are packing up, bag and baggage, plums, almonds and all—to hasten to the prettiest hermitage in the most delightful of all islands, there to sip in genteel ease the very cream of all earthly beatitude.

Why, Sir, there is enough of substantial happiness in these very two months, to be spread out by a reasonable man into plaisters for every sore of a life of threescore and ten years. And yet I'll lay fifty pounds that in less that six months, we shall see you moping in some dark corner, swearing at the miseries of human existence, and wondering how any thinking being can look for pleasure on this side of Eternity. You are a sad dog, Master Brad, a thankless fellow towards the prodigality of Providence, if ever you let a single hint of despondency or low spirits drop from your lips. Remember I tell you so, and, by Heavens, I'll prove it to the world too, if ever I hear one word more of your whining! I wish to the Lord, you could only taste of my daily mess of porridge! It may be wholesome, and it is dressed in the newest fashion; but as to salt, pepper, or toothsomeness—it has, indeed, as little of it as you can possibly suppose in the milk pap of one of your sucking babes of six weeks old. Aye! and it all goes down with poor Keith, and *cheerfully* too! for his great

talent lies in fitting his stomach for the food that is to fill it. My love to Lord Suffolk, Rigby, and all your companions. I love you much for the virtues that belong to you; but I would give the world for a six weeks' trial of your vices.

Adieu, my dear Brad,

R. M. Keith.

A melancholy interest is attached to the above letter; both as being the last of a humorous nature, which, for many months, (in consequence of the death of his father, before so fully adverted to,) Sir Robert Keith addressed to any correspondent whatever, and still more as being the last probably ever received from him by his unhappy friend; the termination of whose life, (Walpole hints by his own hand,) took place not many weeks after the dispatch of the very letter, enumerating those very fortunate circumstances in his lot in life, on which, Sir Robert, in reply, (and not without a benevolent purpose,) intentionally dwells.

Every one who has followed the correspondence, must have observed, even amid its occasional playfulness on the part of the favourite of fortune, in whom the world saw merely an object of envy, and whom the virulence of faction often singled out as the mark through whom to wound his powerful patrons, the Dukes of Bedford and Grafton—a morbid tendency to mental gloom (consequent apparently on the physical depression of a complaint more common then than now in England), frequently alluded to by Sir Robert, as his "nasty ague"—during a paroxysm of which the rash act must have been committed, which wrung his friend's heart with painful surprise, and left an amiable wife and children bereaved of a kind and affectionate parent.

And here it is impossible to forbear remarking on the many traits of high and generous sentiment, as well

as good feeling, and domestic virtues scattered over the correspondence; which (not to mention the conclusive proof resulting from the attachment of a distinguished circle of the first men in England, and the warm friendship of a man like Sir Robert Keith, himself the soul of honour and integrity) may serve to redeem, from the aspersions cast on it by the malignity of party, the character of one, of whom the same Junius who gave it as his solemn deliberate opinion that the great Earl of Mansfield was the "worst man that ever existed on the face of the earth," only spoke disparagingly, as of a too successful placeman.

END OF VOL. I.

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